

# IMPACT REPORT

## 2025





# FOOD *is* POWER

## But Not Everyone Has a Seat at the Table Yet.

We believe food is more than a necessity. It shapes culture, builds community, and lays the foundation for a healthy future. Yet, for too many of our neighbors, fresh, healthy food remains out of reach. This is the challenge before us: rising food insecurity, vanishing farmland, and inequities that leave too many without a seat at the table. Meeting this moment requires bold, coordinated action to ensure that every family can access fresh, culturally reflective food and that local growers, fishers, and makers have the opportunity to thrive.

### Food Insecurity

**2 in 5** Rhode Island households facing **food insecurity**



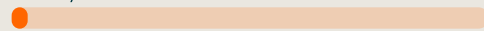
**1 in 4** Newport's **children** living in poverty



### Food Source

**< 3%** food consumed in Rhode Island is **locally sourced**

locally sourced



not locally sourced



### Land Access

**80%**

**farmland lost** in Rhode Island since 1940



**96%**

**projected loss** of farmland in the state by 2040



# Nourishing Healthier PEOPLE PLACES & ECONOMIES

ACT is the only organization on Aquidneck Island dedicated to comprehensive food system transformation. Our work is anchored in three simple but powerful words:

“ [ACT] is addressing near-term food insecurity, while also driving long-term system change. Their leadership is passionate and visionary, while also resourceful and scrappy. Every dollar invested in their work is a dollar well spent. They are a well run nonprofit that is making an incredible impact in the community.” ”

**Julie Owens, CEO  
Social Enterprise  
Greenhouse**



*grow*

We offer land to new farming businesses and public garden spaces where neighbors share seeds, recipes, harvest, and stories.



*eat*

Through weekly markets and SNAP incentives, we ensure fresh food is accessible to all while supporting the livelihoods of our growers, fishers, and makers.



*connect*

We educate the next generation on growing and harvesting fresh foods, fostering a community that values the land and each other.





# What is a *food system*?

A food system is the full cycle of how food moves through a community – from growing and harvesting, to processing, transporting, selling, and eating. It also includes what happens after we're done, like composting and returning nutrients to the soil. When each part of this cycle works well, communities have healthier people, stronger local economies, and less waste.



# How we *strengthen* the food system

We envision a food system for Aquidneck Island that is strong, resilient, and fair – one in which fresh, local food is affordable, abundant, and accessible to all.

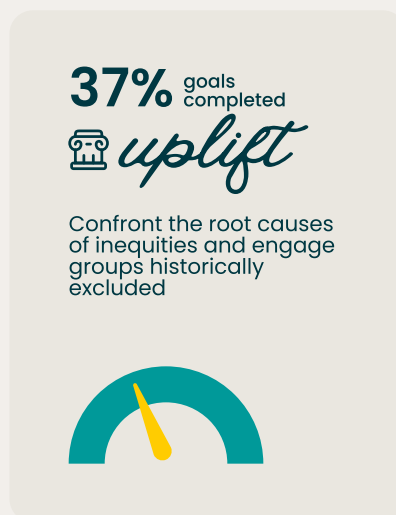


# 2025 Progress and Performance

## BY *the* NUMBERS



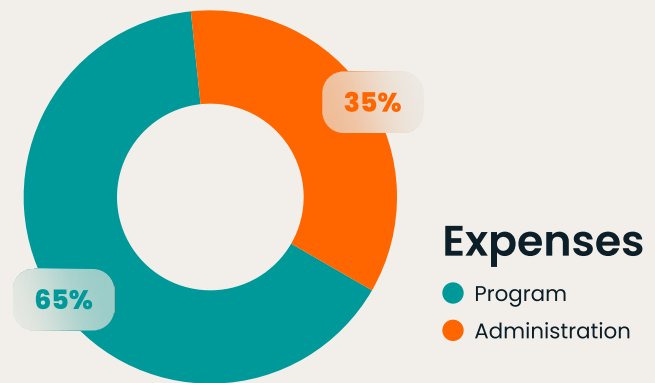
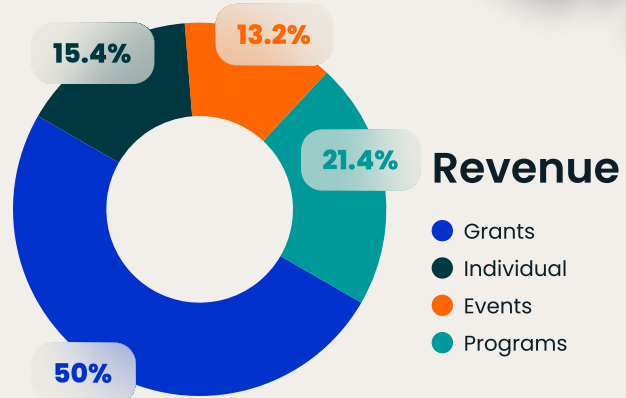
In 2025, we launched our new, community-powered strategic plan which will guide our work for the next two years. It is centered in a vision for our island where fresh food is abundant, affordable, and accessible to all. The plan focuses our work under five strategic pillars that together, strengthen the impact, reach, and fiscal health of our organization. Despite the uncertainties and losses we - like many nonprofits - faced in 2025, we made steady progress against our goals and plan to accelerate it in 2026. Aquidneck Islanders deserve a food system that is strong and fair. Work remains to get there. We're committed to getting it done. View the full plan at [actlocalri.org](http://actlocalri.org).





This year was a challenging year for nonprofit organizations. And while the challenges were not limited to financial, nor are they behind us, the fiscal realities we faced in 2025 forced many agencies to make extremely hard decisions. At ACT, we met this moment through a focus on the fundamentals, teamwork, and creativity. We clarified our purpose, streamlined service delivery, adopted a new fiscal model, and forged strategic partnerships to increase our capacity and impact. What we didn't do was compromise program quality or reach; we strengthened both. And we are ending this year in a positive financial position – and primed to accelerate our work in 2026. We are grateful to the village that made this possible.

## BUDGET *snapshot*



## YEAR OVER YEAR *progress*

**Reduced** overall grant reliance from >70% to <55%



**More than doubled** individual & corporate gifts



Doubled total grant dollars captured **attracting 38% new funders**



# Connecting local people to local food



*year in review*

 total markets

60

 market visits

41,880

 growers & makers

46

15 NEW VENDORS

ACT's farmers markets are the heart of our local food movement—welcoming thousands of shoppers each year and creating direct connections between families and the growers, fishers, and makers who nourish our community. More than just a place to buy food, our markets are vibrant gathering spaces where neighbors share recipes, children discover new flavors, and local businesses thrive.

By participating in programs like SNAP and Bonus Bucks, ACT ensures that fresh, healthy food is affordable and accessible to everyone. Each market visit strengthens our local economy, supports small businesses, and builds a more resilient food system for Aquidneck Island.



"My kids look forward to visiting your farmers market every week. It's such a peaceful, welcoming space."

*Leigh, Market Shopper*



# Growing fresh food and stronger communities together



*year in review*

 garden plots

80

 community gardens

8

 acres leased

0.41

THE DAISY EDITION

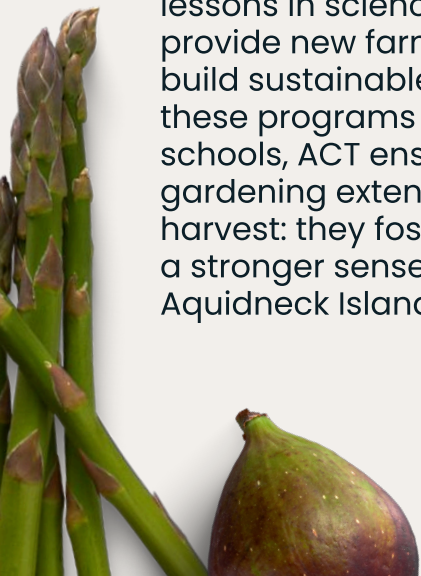
Our community gardens and farmland are spaces where neighbors connect, families learn, and new farmers take root. Across 8 gardens and 80 plots, islanders share seeds, recipes, and harvests, creating a food system that reflects the diversity of our community.

ACT's gardens turn vacant land into thriving spaces of learning, equity, and opportunity. They empower families without access to yards to grow their own food, give children hands-on lessons in science and nutrition, and provide new farmers with the tools to build sustainable businesses. By rooting these programs in neighborhoods and schools, ACT ensures that the benefits of gardening extend far beyond the harvest: they foster pride, resilience, and a stronger sense of belonging across Aquidneck Island.



"[The garden gives] us a sense of purpose spending time outdoors and fresh veggies which we had enough to share with our family and friends."

*Gardener at Island Community Farm*



# Inspiring the next generation of food leaders.

Learning  
*for all*

*year in review*



school  
garden  
students

400



camp  
participants

56



program  
interactions

1100+

ACT's learning programs give young people the chance to discover where food comes from and how it shapes their health, community, and environment. Through school gardens, summer camps, and youth leadership initiatives, students learn to plant, harvest, and prepare fresh foods while building confidence and curiosity.

Our Food Explorer program teaches skills that range from science and nutrition to teamwork and stewardship. Every lesson nurtures healthier habits and a stronger, more resilient food system for Aquidneck Island.



"Many of my students don't have yards, nevermind gardens. I love how excited they get when they see the actual vegetables and fruits appearing."

*Teacher at Pell Elementary School*



# Join the *movement* to end food insecurity



Food is power—it shapes culture, builds community, and lays the foundation for a healthy future. ACT has proven solutions: farmers' markets, farm & gardens, learning programs, and advocacy efforts that directly address the urgent challenge of food insecurity. To learn more about ACT programs and opportunities, visit [actlocalri.org](http://actlocalri.org)



## Donate

Your gift helps ensure every family can access fresh, healthy food year-round.

## Volunteer

Share your time and skills to support markets, gardens, and learning programs.



## Shop

Support local growers, fishers, and makers by choosing fresh food at ACT's vibrant markets.

