



EDUCATION  
STEWARDSHIP  
SUSTAINABILITY

**innovate**  
**2023**  
**to elevate**

ANNUAL REPORT

## OUR APPROACH

# Our approach transcends relief by focusing on actively dismantling the barriers that prevent long-term self-sufficiency in people, businesses and entire communities.

Our neighbors across Omaha are fighting food insecurity, unemployment, financial hardship, or reduced academic opportunity. These are the community-identified needs at the heart of the work and purpose of No More Empty Pots. In 2023, our reach extended throughout the Omaha area, particularly in zip codes where we know our marginalized or Black, Indigenous, and People of Color neighbors are affected more disproportionately than others.

While food banks, food pantries, and other hunger-relief organizations act as a necessary first line of defense against food insecurity, No More Empty Pots follows a unique approach by targeting the systemic causes of inequity to opportunity and services. Our programs transcend relief by focusing on actively dismantling the barriers that prevent long-term self-sufficiency in people, businesses and entire communities.

We believe food is a catalyst of change, expression of art and culture, and a connector of the human spirit and condition. Many of our programs focus on food or supporting our local food system in some way; however, other programs have evolved to address the root causes of hunger, whether or not direct food access is at the center.

**We know that every person is capable of living out their best life on their own terms if given the opportunity, resources and education. Your support enables us to leverage individual and community assets, overcome barriers, and empower individuals to thrive. Together, we can build a more resilient and equitable future for all.**



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Every program is created to provide and leverage

# EDUCATION

We prioritize environmental, economic, and resource

# STEWARDSHIP

Decision making is evaluated based on long-term

# SUSTAINABILITY



**The mission of No More Empty Pots is to connect individuals and groups to improve self-sufficiency, regional food security and economic resilience of urban and rural communities through advocacy and action.**

Education and food access have been at the core of programming since our founding in 2010. Food demonstrations, workshops, and the Community Market Basket food distribution program launched in 2011. Community Harvest and Community Education remain active programs today.

2010

2017

Impacting over 94 businesses since its origin, kitchen rental services at the Food Hub launched in 2017. Entrepreneurial support has evolved today to offer a range of services and resources to all business types, including offering professional coaching and workshops to entrepreneurs.

2020

Programs pivoted to support emerging community needs in 2020. That year, over 4,194 produce boxes were distributed to households in need. Programming through 2024 continues to evolve and adapt to change rapidly by prioritizing community responsiveness.



**LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO**

Over seven years ago, I began this incredible journey with No More Empty Pots as the Director of Strategic Communications. As the years went on, I wore many hats including Chief Operating Officer. This year, I am grateful and honored to take on leading the organization as our President and CEO.

Fueled by the bold vision left by the tenacious spirit of Nancy Williams, we stand at a pivotal moment in our history. No More Empty Pots experienced unprecedented growth in 2023, thanks to your unwavering support and belief in our mission. Now we are faced with a new challenge: **How we manage and sustain our success will shape our legacy for years to come.**

Our approach must require grit, courage, and resilience—the very essence upon which our organization was built—to break through this next glass ceiling. We must push beyond boundaries, challenge norms, and embrace needed change with a renewed conviction. We must lead with **innovation to elevate** to new heights.

Let me paint the future—a bold canvas of self-sufficiency, food security, and economic resilience for each person in Greater Omaha.

- Imagine **a child walking to school** in North Omaha, not just with books but also with access to hands-on education in STEM fields, nurturing dreams of a future career that knows no bounds.
- Picture an entrepreneur, fueled by passion and supported by resources, crafting a legacy that extends far beyond their own success—a legacy for **their children's children.**
- Envision a mother, once burdened by the struggle of stretching her grocery bill to feed her family, now empowered with access to **local nutritious food** and financial stability.

**I see our future vividly.** I believe wholeheartedly in our ability to get there, but the work starts now. It starts with you and me charting the course and working bravely together. Thank you for being on the journey with me.

Talia McGill  
President & CEO

2023...

**innovate to elevate**

## 10 YEAR VISION

No More Empty Pots creates programs that are catalysts for transformation, connecting people, solving problems, creating equity in opportunity, and investing in individuals as whole persons. We leverage the food system **so that people, the plant, and the economy thrive.**

**How do we get there?** Since September of 2021, the leadership team of No More Empty Pots participates in quarterly capacity building workshops facilitated by an external consultant. This year, the team refined the organization's ten-year strategic goals including:



**No More Empty Pots was founded in 2010.** In that year, four friends in North Omaha came together to share their strengths and help their neighbors act on their talents and dreams. Today, partnership remains a cornerstone of our organization. We know we can go further when we work strategically together across the community and region.

To achieve our **10 Year Vision**, we are committed to expanding partnerships in areas where innovation and resource sharing are key. Together with our partners, we are shaping a future of meaningful, sustainable impact through knowledge sharing and leaning into our own strengths.

**Talia McGill**  
President & CEO



## 2023 MILESTONES

2023 was a monumental year, *thanks to you!*

**\$3,128,765 was raised in grants and contributions.**

This is all thanks to you. We are continually grateful for our community's generosity in building up our neighbors' food security, economic resilience and self-sufficiency.

**4,603 individuals were served in 40 zip codes.**

That's a 10% increase in people impacted from the previous year. Our number of community education clients also grew from 20 to 39 organizations from 2022 to 2023.

**A new building in North Omaha opened.**

The Greenhouse is a 17,500 square foot facility located on the Highlander Accelerator campus, owned by Seventy Five North Revitalization Corp. The community celebrated its opening in December.

**Our President & CEO appointment was announced.**

The Board of Directors appointed Talia McGill as our next President and CEO effective January 1st of 2024. This appointment follows the planned succession of our Co-Founder Nancy Williams.



**4,603**

INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED



**2,482**

PROGRAM HOURS



**40**

ZIP CODES SERVED



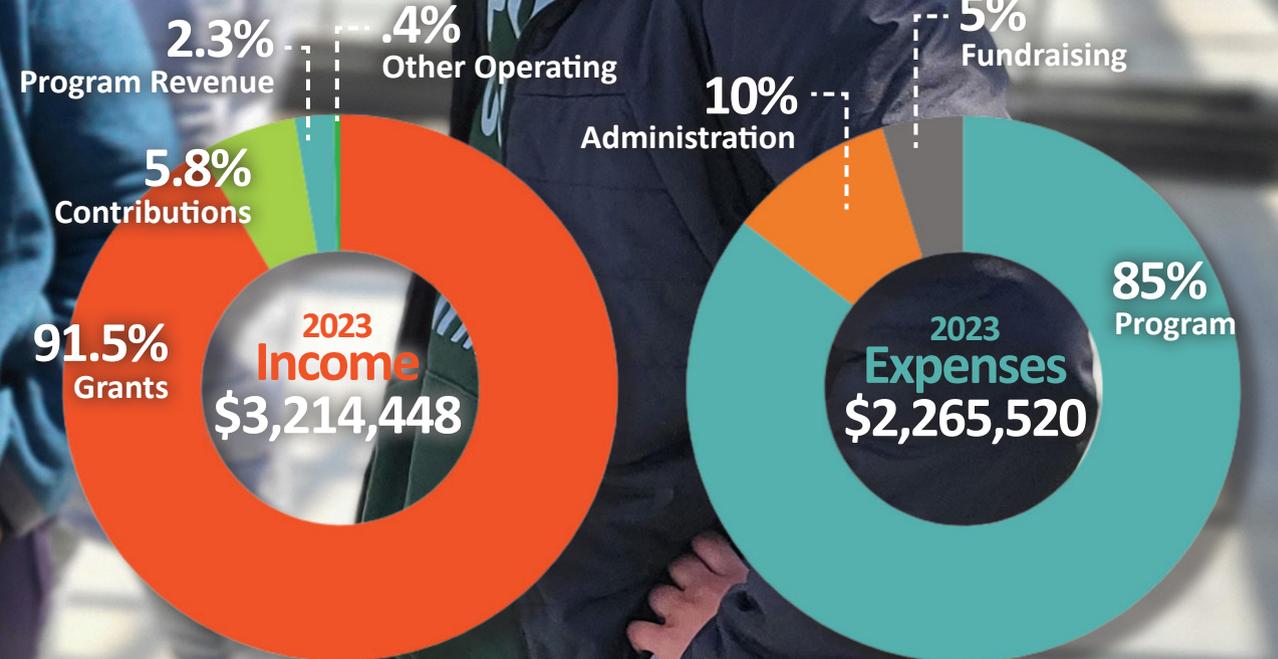
**38,645**

POUNDS OF LOCAL FOOD



**165**

VOLUNTEERS



\*Figures were not audited at the time of publishing.

## GARDEN, NUTRITION & CULINARY EDUCATION

To increase self-sufficiency, No More Empty Pots provides hands-on food preparation, growing and nutrition education through custom programs. Our lessons integrate Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics (STEAM). In 2023, you helped us achieve:



548

HOURS OF EDUCATION

*Promoting self-sufficiency through engaging education has been at the core of our programming since 2010.*



1,994

INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED

*Our approach is intergenerational, impacting youth, adults and seniors. In 2023, a renewed focus was placed on educating new parents.*



37

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

*Over 37 community-based organizations partnered with our team for workshops, lesson planning and field trips in 2023.*

### 39 Community-Based Education Partners

All Saints School  
Carter Lake Club of Boys & Girls Club of the Midlands  
Child Saving Institute  
Collective for Youth  
Completely KIDS  
Council Bluffs Club of Boys & Girls Club of the Midlands  
Druid Hill Elementary  
Florence Elementary  
Franklin Elementary  
Gifford Park Elementary  
Girls Inc. Emma Lozier Center  
Holy Name School  
Howard Kennedy Elementary  
Integrated Life Choices  
Kennedy Florence Elementary  
Kids Can Community Center  
Kiewit Luminarium  
Lauritzen Gardens  
Liberty Elementary  
Millard Central Club of Boys & Girls Club of the Midlands

Miller Park Camp of Kids Can  
Morton Club of Boys & Girls Club of the Midlands  
Morton Middle School  
Mosaic Omaha  
Nebraska Black Doula Collective  
North High Science Academy  
North Omaha Summer Arts  
NorthStar Foundation  
Omaha Performing Arts  
Omaha Public Schools  
Sacred Heart School  
Seventy Five North Revitalization Corp.  
The Durham Museum  
The Salvation Army of Omaha  
The Union for Contemporary Art  
United Way of the Midlands  
Urban League of Nebraska  
Walnut Hill Elementary  
Westside Club of Boys & Girls Club of the Midlands

## PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHTS



### Nebraska Black Doula Collective

Alisha is a trained chef and Doula. Her work extends beyond her job title into the holistic lifestyle she leads dedicated to community service and education. She participated in the Seed to Table gardening workshops, where she learned to add gardening to her toolkit of care for the community.

Alisha put her green thumb to action by turning her own backyard into a community garden to inspire other parents and neighbors. Alisha exemplifies creating a legacy of love in how she chooses to amplify her own abundance with others.



### After-School Programming

Aniyah, a fourth grader, enjoys nature, especially plants and bugs. She loves to care for her dog and hopes someday soon to start a watermelon garden! No More Empty Pots offers after-school programming that teaches hands-on lessons in gardening, agriculture, nutrition and cooking for students like Aniyah. Aniyah is an enthusiastic young learner who thrives in school and loves to learn. She is already dreaming about her future career possibilities in the STEM field. Your support creates an engaging learning environment in school for future leaders like Aniyah.



### Kiewit Luminarium

No More Empty Pots is engaging with students, ages 18-25, in Kiewit Luminarium's paid employment and professional development program for high school graduates. The participants are called Luminators. The Luminators have been working on a variety of STEAM-related projects, including planting and nurturing herbs and spices at The Greenhouse. Through this hands-on experience, the Luminators learned about the germination process and presented their findings with Kiewit Luminarium guests and friends.

**Meet Jameea Vasser.** She wears multiple hats as a teacher, caregiver, entrepreneur, and business manager. Her business model through **Vasser Academy** is to create a future society of creative innovators through an advanced in-home childcare service in Omaha. She joined **The Entrepreneur Journey** program, seeking guidance for business expansion.

Through the program, Jameea began receiving personalized mentorship and guidance from other Black women entrepreneurs. Coaching helped Jameea refine her vision and create a robust business plan for her to follow. Her ultimate goal is to reinvest her annual revenue to open multiple childcare facilities in North Omaha, contributing to the community's **growth and development.**



## ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Our program seeks to address the **barriers that many disinvested entrepreneurs face to reach success.**

The **Entrepreneur Journey** program is dedicated to supporting entrepreneurs with the skills, tools, and resources needed to launch and sustain successful businesses. **40 local entrepreneurs** participated in 2023. The program aims to ensure all business dreamers and developers have an equitable opportunity to navigate the competitive entrepreneurial landscape. The program pairs participants with the following:



One-on-one mentorship with local coaches



Access to workshops and business opportunities



Networking with like-minded entrepreneurs



Other customized business support

## 40 PARTICIPANTS IN “THE ENTREPRENEUR JOURNEY” IN 2023

**Adonna Bryant**, *Liit Ladies in Information Technology*  
**Alain Hernandez**, *Havana Man*  
**Alecia Steed**, *Busy Vegan*  
**Alia Cecil**, *Kay Marketing & Consulting*  
**Alisha Davis**, *Davies Dojo*  
**April Vaughn**, *Not Just Cakes, LLC*  
**Armando Aviles**, *Salsa Macha Mi Casa*  
**Ashley Haynes**, *Majestic Living, LLC and Sandra’s Place*  
**Aweel David**, *Bohar*  
**Brandy Clements**, *Beyond Beginnings with B*  
**Cecilia Codina**, *Aliboney*  
**Chasitie Carroll**  
**Cornell Austin**, *Cornell’s Catering*  
**Derrick Baines**, *Bain’s Kitchen*  
**Dillon Martinez**  
**Dominique Washington**, *MWT Food Truck*  
**Donniel Hardy**, *Yell’s Oils*  
**Heather Campagna**, *Sweetie Hie*  
**Heaven Lawson**, *Sweet Leigh*  
**Jameea Vasser**, *Vasser Academy*

**Jennifer Reyna**, *Cafécito Omaha*  
**Kaveri Malhotra**, *The Tea House*  
**Keilah Scott**, *True North Investments*  
**Kelsey Escobar**, *Beauty By Kelsey and Chef Kelsey Kitchen*  
**Kelsey Jones**, *Source Farms*  
**LaRita Duncan**, *L.Marie Eats*  
**LaShanda Cotton**, *BOSSticated*  
**Marciana Gillispie**, *Comfort: A Katy Marie Bakery*  
**Melissa Polendo**, *Polendo Business Development*  
**Monique Cribbs**, *Omaha Cravings Co.*  
**Orlanda Whitfield**, *Still Poppin*  
**Patrick Atwell**, *Pickle Me This*  
**Rebecca St. Fleur**  
**Ronell LeDon Bonner**, *TopSpot Inc.*  
**Rosio Granados Trejo**, *Coffee Alley/Callejón del Café*  
**Sierra Mahone**  
**Tashlin Harris**, *Pedi Pedi Pedicures*  
**Teryn Baker**, *Tip Top Takeout & Catering, LLC*  
**Tim Walker**, *Roosters Catering and Events*  
**Tylessa Wright**, *Dippy Treats*

## LOCAL FOOD SUPPORT

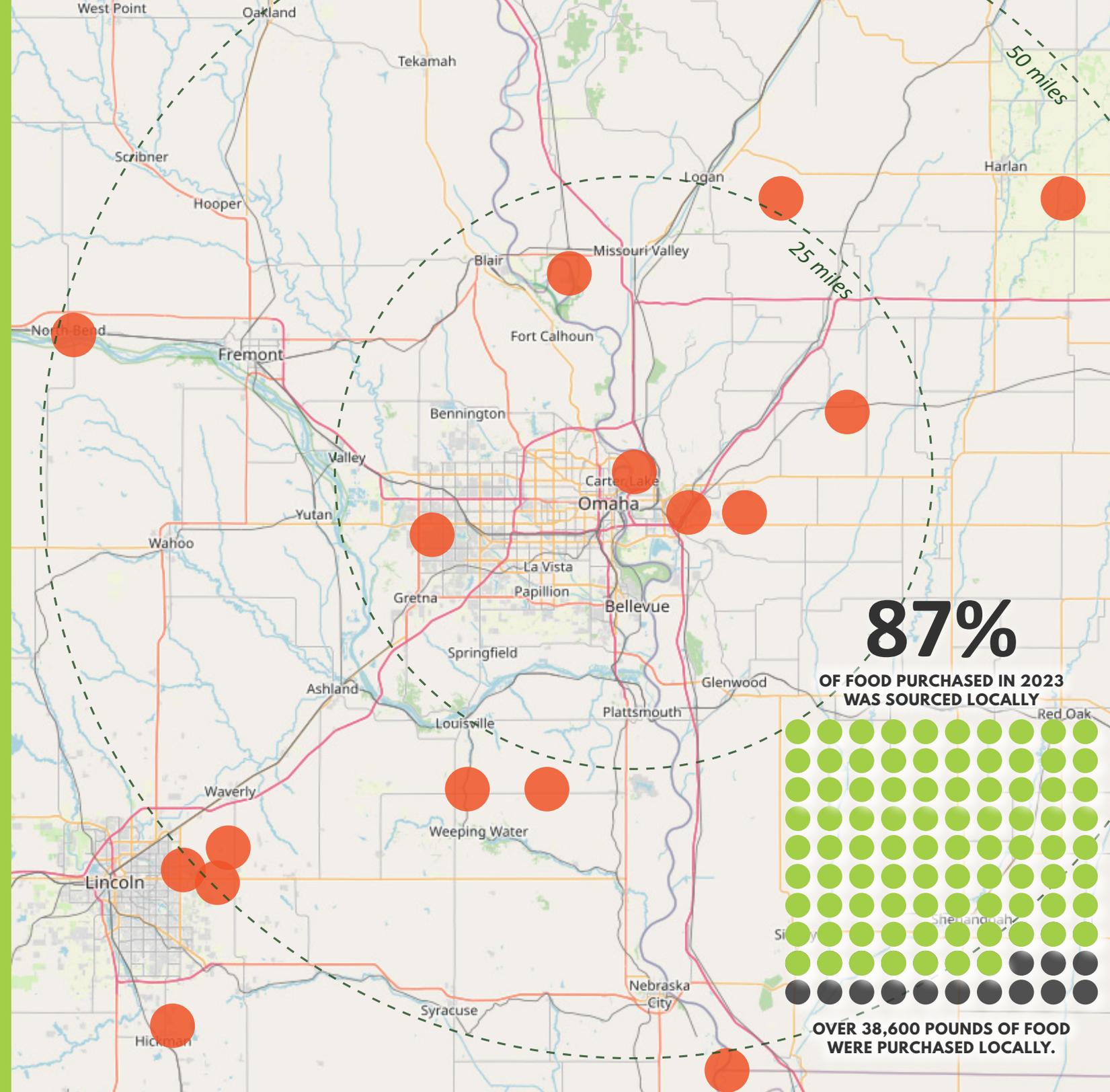
We invest in the economy and food system by promoting the market expansion of area farmers. No More Empty Pots sourced over **38,600 pounds** of food from **40 area farmers** in 2023 (listed below) and provided procurement services to other local consumers and businesses to do the same.

We are a founding partner of the **Nebraska Farm to School Network**, where our team supports planning efforts of connecting schools, especially Early Care Education sites, to locally sourced food.

The **Heartland Regional Food Business Center**, established in 2023, includes No More Empty Pots and 13 other partners in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, northwest Arkansas, and a designated tribal trade coalition to expand the markets of farm and food enterprises.

- Beavers Produce - Rogers, NE
- Benson Bounty - Omaha, NE
- Blue Gate Farm - Chariton, IA
- Bridgewater Farm - Bridgewater, IA
- Clover Patch Farm - Blair, NE
- Early Morning Harvest - Pandora, IA
- Ellsworth Crossing - Waterloo, NE
- FarmTable Procurement & Delivery - Harlan, IA
- Flavor Country Farm - Crescent, IA
- Grain Place Foods - Marquette, NE
- Grandview Farm - Fremont, NE
- Green School Farms - Lincoln, NE
- Grimm Family Farm - Williamsburg, IA
- Junge's Produce - Underwood, IA
- Kalona Noodles - Kalona, IA
- Little Town Gardens - Gibbon, NE
- Lone Tree Foods - Lincoln, NE
- Long Walk Farm - Council Bluffs, IA
- Manley View Farms - Murdock, NE
- Nebraska Food Co-op - Julian, NE
- Nebraska Vegetable and Protein - Nebraska City, NE
- Omaha Sunflower Co-op - Omaha, NE
- Omstead Family Farm - Omaha, NE
- One Farm - Logan, IA
- Plum Creek Farms - Burchard, NE
- Robinette Farms - Martell, NE
- Source Farms - Hoskins, NE
- Twin Pines Farm - Treynor, IA
- Wolff Farms - Norfolk, NE
- Wuaneta Roller Mills - Wauneta, NE

## PRODUCER/FARM VENDORS



**Meet Megan.** Megan is a mother of three and was struggling to afford fresh food for her family, while working full-time.

She began receiving **Community Harvest** boxes of fresh food from No More Empty Pots to help supplement her grocery budget for the time being.

She says her children love the fresh produce and are delighted by the flavor and color of items like **Lions Mane mushrooms and purple carrots.**

Thanks to your support, Megan is now able to feed her family high quality food she wouldn't purchase regularly at the store. She's grateful for the joy it brings her family at meal time.

## FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Food distribution at No More Empty Pots provides access to the freshest possible fruits and vegetables to over **588 individuals** in **34 zip codes** in Greater Omaha. Services also included prepared, plant-based meals using local ingredients. Delivery services provides solutions for individuals including those with weakened immune systems or without access to transportation.



# 86%

### IMPROVED FOOD SECURITY

*Respondents said they're better able to feed themselves and their families.*



# 75%

### MATCHED WITH FUNDS

*75% of qualifying households received services at no cost with matching funds.*



# \$1,301

### PAID WITH SNAP BENEFITS

*Over \$1,301 of SNAP benefits were spent on fresh food services.*



# 12,435

### MEALS PROVIDED

*12,435 meals and 6,651 CSAs were provided in 2023.*



## WORKFORCE READINESS

The No More Empty Pots eight-week **Culinary Certificate Program** provides on-the-job workforce readiness training, hands-on culinary instruction and support with job placement for individuals interested in the food industry. The program is accepted for college credit equivalency, accredited by **Nebraska Department of Education**, and includes **ServSafe Food Handler Training** and **University of Nebraska Lincoln Extension Nutrition Education Program** certifications. In 2023, four ceremonies celebrated **16 graduates** (listed below) of the program. The 23rd cohort of students launched in 2024.

With expansion at **The Greenhouse** facility in 2023, No More Empty Pots looks forward to further developing our offerings of certified training programs for unemployed and underemployed individuals in areas of horticulture or local value chain coordination.



*Teryn Baker, Cohort 18*



*Briana Ballew, Cohort 20*



*Olha Beyza, Cohort 19*



*Ronell Bonner, Cohort 21*



*Citlalli Campos, Cohort 20*



*Jacklin Cherry, Cohort 18*



*Brock Fairbrother, C21*



*Jordan Inman Roach, C21*



*Janaeja Luster, Cohort 21*



*Sahfiya Mahamane, C19*



*Na'Veon Myles, Cohort 20*



*Olena Serafino, Cohort 19*



*Cassidy Spevak, Cohort 21*



*Shawn Thomas, Cohort 20*



*Makay Weliyo, Cohort 19*



*Faith Young, Cohort 21*

## SUPPORTERS

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Jana Benitez  
Joan Benjamin  
Judith Berns  
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Ali Khan  
Jack and Stephanie Koraleski  
Ann Kramer  
Larry Kurtz  
Joseph Kutlas  
Michael and Susan Lebens  
William Lewis  
Catherine Lexau  
James Liest

Lutheran Women of Omaha  
Maria Malnack  
Mary Manternach  
Sara Martens  
Mele Mason  
Amy Mather  
Michelle Mathine  
Teggy Maxwell  
Shelli Mayer  
Lynn McCormack  
James McCormick  
Talia McGill  
James McKain  
Guy McLaughlin  
Makayla and Kenny McMorris  
Brigitte McQueen  
Othello and Tulani Meadows  
Kate Medlin  
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Nebraska Medicine  
Nebraskans for Solar Energy  
Network for Good  
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Kelsie Nygren  
Kerri O'Connell  
Mark O'Leary  
Omaha Public Power District  
Omaha Restaurant Association  
Daniel Padilla  
Leslie Palensky  
Barbara Peters  
Janet Place  
Denise Powell  
Donald Preister  
Nancy Pridal  
Silva Raker  
Carley Raneri  
Neal Ratzlaff  
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Womens Club  
Patricia Urbick  
Della Vest  
Alex Walters  
Maggie Weber  
Katie Weitz  
Roger Weitz  
Weitz Family Foundation  
Leslie Wells  
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Werner Enterprises  
Patrick Wheeler  
Whole Kids Foundation  
William and Ruth Scott  
Family Foundation  
WIPA

Michael and Wendy Wohlers-  
Gerdes  
Aaron and Ashley Wolfson  
Wood n Bees Farm  
Shari Woodbury  
Brian Woolfolk  
Michael Ziskey

## VOLUNTEER GROUPS

Blackburn Alternative High  
School  
BlueCross BlueShield of Nebraska  
Children's Hospital & Medical  
Center  
Creighton Anthropology Course  
Conagra Brands  
Creighton University  
Farm Credit Services of America  
Metropolitan Community College  
Partnership 4 Kids  
Refugee Women Rising  
Rich Harvest Winery  
The Sherwood Foundation  
Union Pacific Railroad  
University of Nebraska Omaha  
Service Learning Academy

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

African American Professionals  
Day and Career Fair  
AFROMAHA Dunia Youth Festival  
Children's Hospital BeInvolved  
Resource Fair  
Common Soil Seed Library Open  
House  
Durham Museum Teachers Night  
Food Bank Omaha Agency  
Conference  
Highlander Community Day  
Highlander Health and Wellness  
Expo  
I Be Black Girl and Nebraska Black  
Doula Collective Baby Shower  
Immanuel Hospital Baby Fair  
Kennedy Elementary School  
STEAM Night  
Lauritzen Gardens Festival  
Luthern Women of Omaha  
Mandela Fest

Minne Lusa Halloween on the  
Boo-Levard  
NCPA Professional Day  
North Omaha Summer Arts  
Garden Walk  
Omaha North High School  
Academy Night  
Partnership 4 Kids Health Fair  
South High School Family  
Engagement Night  
TriFaith Initiative Healthy Eating  
on a Budget  
United Way of the Midlands 100  
Year Community Celebration  
UNMC Wellness Fair  
Women on a Mission for Change  
Conference

## FOOD HUB KITCHEN RENTERS

Ami's Kitchen  
Big O Bagels Omaha  
Bossticated LLC  
Busy Vegan  
Comfort-a Katy Marie Bakery  
Crum Cakes  
Dundee Popcorn  
Frankly Juiced  
House of Bah  
Kia's Creations  
Leggs & Things, LLC  
New Orleans Sneaux, Inc.  
Omaha Cravings Co.  
Ready Délices  
Sandwich Proper  
Sarah's Southern Comfort  
Still Poppin

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Alisha Davis  
Taylor Goulbourne  
Candice Price  
Greg Shreiber  
Nicka Johnson  
Theodore Skipper

*This page includes participation in 2023. If you see an omission or correction, please contact No More Empty Pots at donations@nmepomaha.org.*

## OUR TEAM

Alia Cecil  
Amy Wehlander  
Ayonna Henderson  
Brian Bendams  
Cyndi Trail  
Dana Rose  
Dex Gabriel-Woods  
Ella Williams  
Hamza Haqqi  
Heather Bowman  
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Natavia Jones  
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Rayn Tot  
Sofia Fox  
Stephanie Finklea  
Susan Whitfield  
Talia McGill  
Tanya Gura  
Taylor Hanna  
Tracey Marsh

## SERVICE LEARNING PARTNERS

Environmental Justice, University  
of California Berkeley  
Marketing, Creighton  
University  
Introduction to Public Relations,  
Creighton University

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EDUCATION  
STEWARDSHIP  
SUSTAINABILITY

[www.nmepomaha.org](http://www.nmepomaha.org)

Administration Building  
8511 N. 30th Street | Omaha, NE 68112

Food Hub  
8501 N. 30th Street | Omaha, NE 68112

The Greenhouse  
2120 N. 30th Street | Omaha, NE 68111

402-502-1642 | [info@nmepomaha.org](mailto:info@nmepomaha.org)



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Cover Photo Courtesy of Debra S. Kaplan