



WealthWorks Report 2019

WealthWorks Executive Summary



Sprout MN, central Minnesota's regional food hub, was formally established in 2012, and coordinates a farm to school program, as well as regional food distribution and processing facility, called the Sprout Growers and Makers Marketplace.

This report serves as an evaluation of Sprout MN's impact on the region since inception. The WealthWorks model of building value chains in the eight forms of Wealth (Financial, Intellectual, Individual, Built, Environmental, Political, Social and Cultural) was used as a tool in the creation of this report.

Summary of Sprout's Impact on Regional Forms of Wealth:

- 1 BUILT**
Processing facility, Marketplace addition, building utilization, and the mobile market [page 5]
- 2 FINANCIAL**
Microlending program, job retention and creation, food hub and vendor sales, grants and loans [page 14]
- 3 INTELLECTUAL**
New partners, networks engaged, and technical assistance through workshops and trainings [page 17]
- 4 INDIVIDUAL**
Nutrition education and demonstrations, number of meals, community supported agriculture program, Choose Health [page 21]
- 5 NATURAL**
Farmland preserved, high tunnel expansion [page 26]
- 6 POLITICAL**
Engagement of low income minorities in decision making processes, multi-language applications at MDA [page 28]
- 7 SOCIAL**
New markets, reinvestment in local foods [page 31]
- 8 CULTURAL**
Culturally diverse interactions and engagement, placemaking investment, storytelling [page 34]

This report demonstrates Sprout MN's regional impact and staying power as an important and effective economic engine.

The creation of this report was funded through a grant awarded to the Region Five Development Commission by ArtPlace America's National Creative Placemaking Fund.

SPROUT MN | Local Food Value Chain Report - Updated 2019



As early as 2007, our rural region recognized the local food system as one of its strongest regional assets. Since that time, we have intentionally focused our efforts toward creating a regional food system that generates local wealth and provides access to healthy affordable local foods.

In 2010, the Region Five Development Commission (R5DC) received \$800,000.00 HUD/DOT/EPA Sustainable Communities Planning grant to develop a 5-county, regional strategic plan. This planning process was called the Resilient Region Project. The Resilient Region plan focused on integrating key sustainability and resilience topics of housing, transportation, energy, natural resources, connectivity/broadband, healthcare, education/workforce development, changing populations, efficiencies-effectiveness, and economic engines.

The Resilient Region Plan explicitly identified arts/culture and “agriculture” as key “economic engines” for the region, and emphasized the need to promote the agricultural sector, specifically local foods.

The effort of building a food hub value chain specifically focused on offering opportunities to those who have not had the opportunity to participate in the agricultural economy. Rural food insecurity remains one of the most vexing challenges in the United States. In Central Minnesota, the Resilient Region consortium played a role to address food insecurity and agricultural viability in a rural context.

“Sprout MN” is our regional food hub formally established in 2012. Sprout coordinates farm to school programs, wholesale distribution to restaurants, hospitals, long-term care and assisted living facilities, and direct to consumer through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs, and is now working with over 100 small family farms in rural, Central Minnesota. Building on the community driven Resilient Region Plan, Sprout partnered with R5DC to open a regional food distribution and processing facility, called Sprout MN. Sprout boasts two fully licensed kitchens, warehousing for aggregation and distribution, and an indoor market - Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace, in Little Falls, MN.

[Sprout held its grand opening in April of 2016.](https://www.brainerddispatch.com/news/4000354-local-food-hub-sprouts-little-falls-former-crestliner-building-takes-new-roots)

<https://www.brainerddispatch.com/news/4000354-local-food-hub-sprouts-little-falls-former-crestliner-building-takes-new-roots>

Sprout’s evolution and incremental scaling was strategically considered and deployed with a focus on supply and demand, including value-added products, and incorporating art as an integral component of the Marketplace. Our standard measurement model builds on the principle of creating wealth within the **8 Community Capitals** (Financial, Intellectual, Individual, Built, Natural, Political, Social and Cultural assets), also known as the WealthWorks model of delivering “Value Chains.”

The WealthWorks model of building value chains aligned with the Resilient Region’s guiding principles, and built upon the foundational concept of when ALL forms of wealth are further executed through the lens of “Ownership and Livelihoods”- that is wealth that stays in the communities from which they are created within- it is wealth that positively impacts the financial, environmental and social outcomes.



PARTNERSHIPS

The body of work described throughout this report was funded by the following valued and respected partnerships:

FEDERAL

USDA Rural Development- LFPP, VAPG, RCDI x2, RMAP, RDBG and the RDCA – Rural Development Community Agreement

STATE

MN Department of Agriculture, University of Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships, Statewide Health Improvement Plan

LOCAL

Lakewood Health Systems, Sourcewell, CHI St. Gabriel’s Health

PHILANTHROPIC

Otto Bremer Foundation, Bush Foundation, Northwest Area Foundation, ArtPlace America, Initiative Foundation, McKnight Foundation, Blandin Foundation, Mardag Foundation

Contributors

The Sprout MN Team & R5DC Team have all contributed to this work and report:

Arlene Jones, Sprout Executive Director

Natalie Keane, Sprout Facility Utilization Director

Jessie Bavelli, Sprout Operations & Marketplace Director

Sena Bergerud, Sprout Facility & Market Associate

Fallon Ryan, Sprout Community Engagement Coordinator

Cheryal Hills, R5DC Executive Director

Dawn Espe, R5DC Senior Regional Development Planner

Staci Headley, R5DC Regional Development Planner

Angela Anderson, R5DC Marketing Director, 2018 & 2019 Report Project Graphic Designer

Lisa Baker Gilk, Marketing Consultant

Peg Churchwell, 2017 Report Project Graphic Designer



Insight



Sprout and R5DC lead teams at “Minced: The Finer Version of Chopped” event (from left to right): Cheryal Hills, R5DC; Jessie Bavelli, Sprout; Sena Bergerud, Sprout; Dawn Espe, R5DC; Arlene Jones, Sprout; Natalie Keane, Sprout. May 2019

The financial investments were earned and well utilized; however, the most important asset acquired during the incubation, development, and sustainability of Sprout were, and continue to be, the relationships that are built.

R5DC & Sprout teamed up from day one to offer an example of how a rural region can develop market channels within the region to support local producers and connect the community to healthy foods in ways that honor our cultural identity. Interestingly enough, Sprout was touted as one of the nation’s few rural-to-rural food hubs. National food hub models are created with rural to urban consideration. Sprout continues to remain steadfastly dedicated to a rural-to-rural food system growth

The partnership of Sprout MN and Region Five Development Commission did not create or evaluate initial local food value chain goals and outcomes/ outputs via the WealthWorks model.

Our team established specific goals and deliverables for each of our multiple funding partners based on their requirements, causing some forms of wealth to be measured while others

were not. For example, if funded for a Microlending program, jobs and dollars leveraged were measured as required by the program funding source, but did not consider impacts to any of the other forms of wealth. This was replicated for each program and funding deliverables. This report is our team’s third annual report to build on a baseline collection of the impacts in each of the 8 forms of wealth. Given that we did not start with a holistic/comprehensive set of goals for the local food value chain across all forms of wealth, we recognize the process is flawed and is not a scientific peer-reviewed study.

Sprout Marketplace Grand Opening:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mL_RztKm2ng



Sprout Video - Our story, our history

https://youtu.be/Yoy67V_c_ks



Content found in blue boxes align with the WealthWorks Hubs and the National Association of Development Organizations (MADO) Research Foundations - WealthWorks Alpha Measures.

wealthworks.org/connect/hubs

The creation of this report was funded through a grant awarded to Region Five Development Commission by ArtPlace America’s National Creative Placemaking Fund.

1. BUILT WEALTH

Investments in physical capital, new construction, renovation, and maintenance that supports the local food value chain.

The fully functioning constructed infrastructure (e.g., buildings, sewer treatment plants, manufacturing and processing plants, energy, transportation, communications infrastructure, technology) needed to support community well-being.

The investment of built infrastructure is necessary to house, transform, and move goods. For a local food value chain, this translates to aggregation, processing and distribution.

Within this project we measured and tracked the following to determine the success of our Built Wealth creation:

MEASUREMENTS OF SUCCESS:

- Amount of new/improved infrastructure that supports the local food value chain.
- Amount of locally owned infrastructure.
 - o Processing Facility - Number square feet and hours utilized
 - o Equipment Investment - \$\$ invested in facility
 - o Sprout Marketplace - Number hours used, Number people attended, Number of users/renters/vendors
 - o Marketplace booth discounts - \$\$ discounted to vendors
 - o EBT and Credit Card (alternative currency) - \$\$ in sales
 - o MarketBucks reimbursement - \$\$ doubled for EBT sales
 - o Co-packing – hours of Sprout staff time (**new measure 2019**)
 - o Mobile Market - Number of vehicles, number of points of sale, \$ reinvested into local food value chain with local growers
 - o Gleaning Program -pounds of food gleaned for low income/low access, \$\$ of input into local food value chain
 - o Local contractors - Number hired for build-out and continued build out

Aggregation is necessary to distribute commodities to institutional buyers and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) members that impact volume of sales.

Processing Facility

A processing facility and Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace was added to the physical capital of the Region in 2016 and fully operational in 2017. This building/space supports the local food value chain, giving the opportunity to conduct business in a space that would have not otherwise been available. Sprout Food Hub aggregation is done at the same facility as the Processing Kitchen and the indoor winter Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace.

Impact

24,680 sq. ft. of total space, of that 17,550 sq. ft. is used for the Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace and event space. Within the 7,130 sq. ft. for Sprout's operations, 1,335 sq. ft. is licensed processing kitchen space and 5,795 sq. ft. is dedicated to food hub warehousing and aggregation. This built infrastructure was added to the five-county region as a result of this project.

Measure tool: Space was tracked via lease agreement. Utilization is measured via online tracking.

Multiple users include value-added food entrepreneurs, community organizations and residents, chefs, University of MN Extension SNAP-Ed Educators, and hospital community outreach programs.

Impact

Number of Hours Used. Utilization includes all hours the facility is used, including kitchen rental by food entrepreneurs, market cooking demos, Sprout events, and meeting space.

Number Hours Used:

2016 – 79

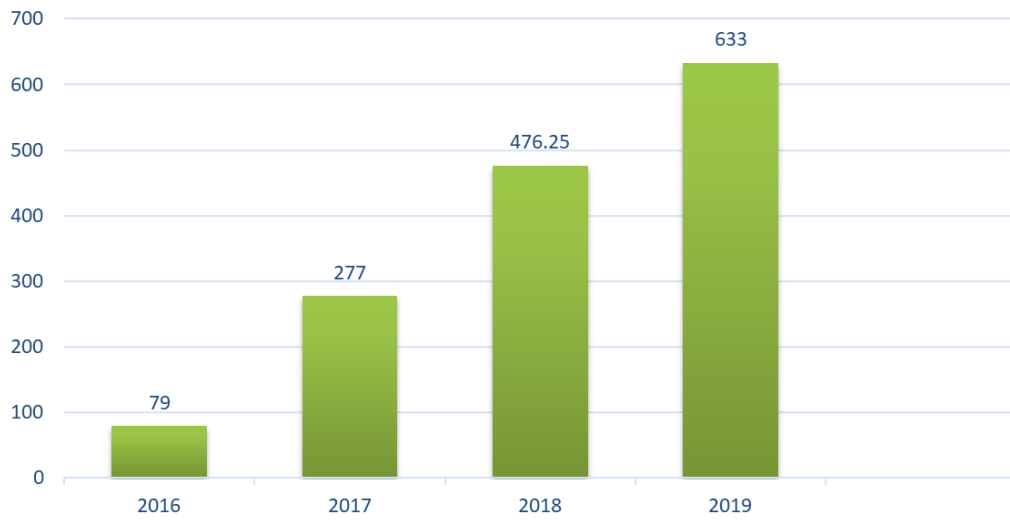
2017 – 277

2018 – 476.25

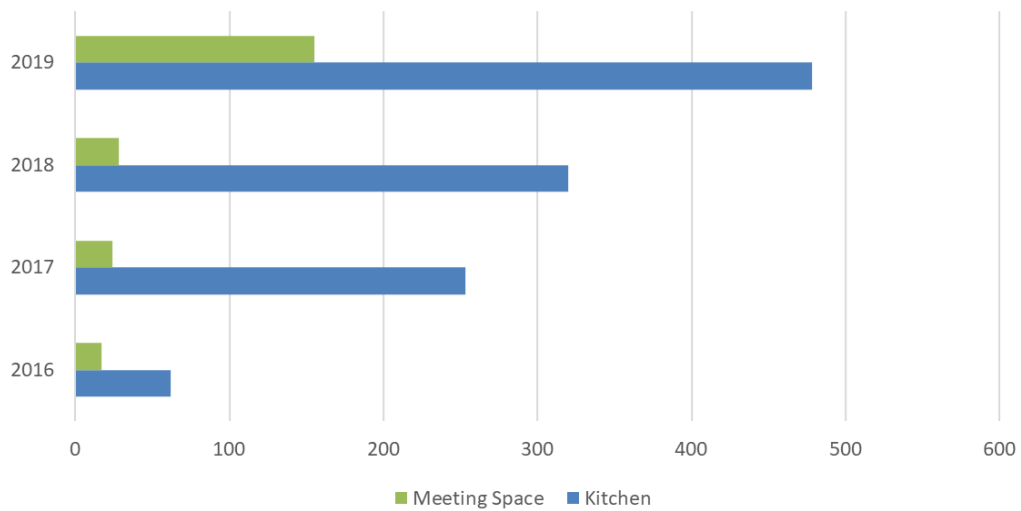
2019 – 633

Measure tool: Microsoft Excel Workbook updated monthly and QuickBooks invoicing

Facility Utilization by Space



Facility Utilization by Hourly Rental



Impact

Equipment investments for scaling up capacity for utilization of facility.

2017: \$8,642.63

2018: \$7,497.33

2019: \$6,323.26

Measure tool: QuickBooks Expenditures

Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace Addition

A Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace was created in Little Falls, Minnesota. The development of the Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace has increased the locally controlled distribution points and the points of sale for regional products.

The Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace space is leased from a non-local resident; however, all of the non-permanent fixtures are the property of Sprout MN which is a locally owned 501c3 non-profit organization.

Impact

Number of Vendors at the Sprout Marketplace:

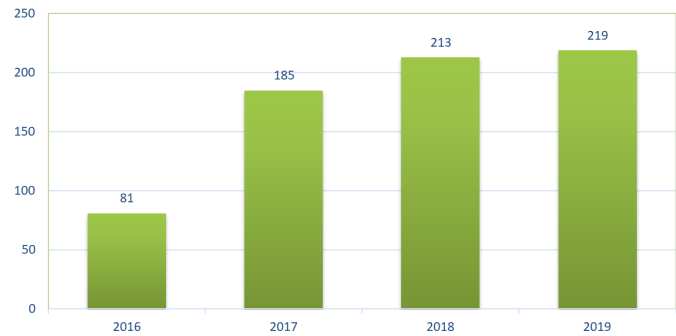
2016 – 81

2017 – 185

2018 – 213

2019 – 219

Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace Vendors

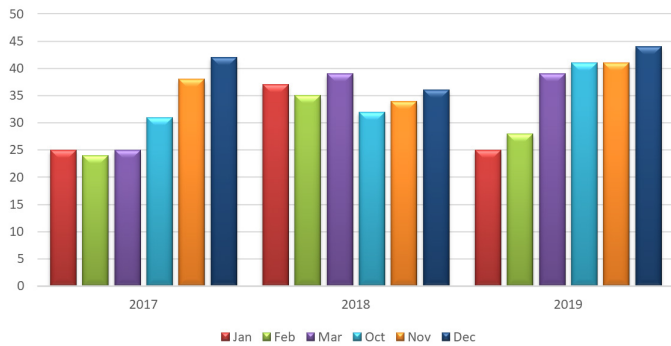


Snapshot: Doug LaBorde

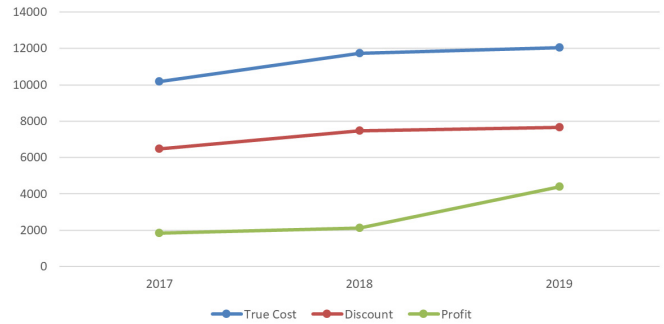
Doug LaBorde retired from professional welding to enjoy his retirement career of blacksmithing. Doug has been a vendor at every single market held at Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace. In 2019, Doug formed Signature Blacksmithing, LLC. His work has been commissioned from Sprout through the generosity of the Artplace America grant awarded to Region Five Development Commission. He has also served as a Board member for Sprout. In a recent vendor survey, Doug reports: “My first market day was also Sprout’s first market. Since then, I have gotten custom projects, commissioned projects from Sprout, TV exposure, collaborated with other artists-vendors, and have more collaborations in the works. Sprout is my local storefront.” Doug’s collaboration with other artists is in the form of forged iron to be used as handles on cutting boards, created by another local artist.



Vendor Instances by Month 2017 - 2019



Marketplace Profit 2017 - 2019



Vendor Instances

Impact

2018: Vendor Sales Reported \$13,021.00

2019: Vendor Sales Reported \$21,254.00

It continues to be noted that a shift to electronic reporting by vendors has decreased participation as this survey of sales is no longer completed at end of market, rather, an email survey post market. This has altered a % of those reporting. Average return rate of survey response in 2019 was 42%.

Marketplace Profit

Impact

Sprout provided \$8,825.00 in marketplace booth discounts in 2018.

Measure tool: QuickBooks

Sprout does not invoke a commission of sales to its vendors. Sprout charged \$10.00 per booth from 2017 – 2019 in efforts to “build” the marketplace, raising the booth fee to \$20.00 in 2019. The true cost of each vendor booth is estimated to be at \$55.00, which includes all Sprout overhead. This figure has not been adjusted since the inception of the marketplace.

Impact

2017: Sprout provided \$6,475.00 in marketplace booth discounts

2018: Sprout provided \$7,455.00 in marketplace booth discounts

2019: Sprout provided \$7,665.00 in marketplace booth discounts

Measure tool: QuickBooks updated each marketplace.

EBT & Credit Card Sales

Impact

Sprout instituted EBT acceptance and alternative currency sales in October of 2017. Shoppers can now run their cards for market tokens, which allows a higher level of spending at the market. This has also allowed Sprout to capture an additional data point of market sales. Sprout also assumes the banking transaction fee for this service provided to both vendors and consumers.

2017 EBT: \$86.00

2017 Credit Card: \$2,641.00

2018 EBT: \$356.00

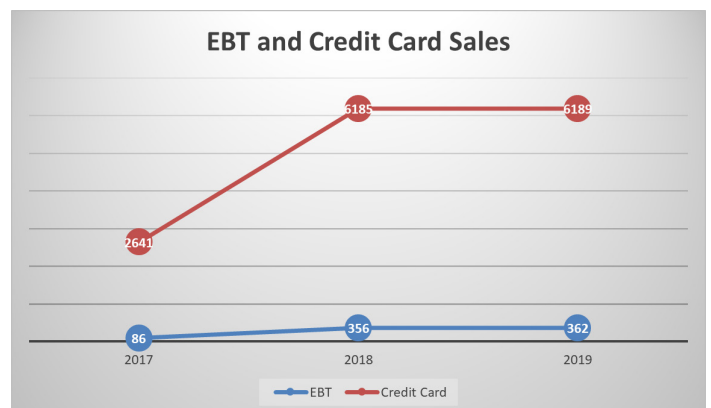
2018 Credit Card: \$6,185.00

2019 EBT: \$362.00

2019 Credit Card: \$6,189.00

Measure tool: Terminal Totals Report from Credit/EBT Machine

EBT and Credit Card Sales



Impact

Sprout instituted “Market Bucks” in October of 2018, supported by Hunger Solutions of Minnesota. This “Spend \$10, Get \$10” program allows EBT recipients to “double” their dollars, being reimbursed dollar for dollar, for every EBT dollar (up to \$10) they spend at the market.

2018 Market Bucks reimbursement: \$160.00

2019: Market Bucks reimbursement: \$266.00

Measure tool: Manually counting & recording Market Bucks received & reimbursed to vendors.

Sprout Marketplace Attendance

The winter monthly Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace takes course over the fall/winter months only. This is intentional so as not to compete with markets that occur spring/summer. Average market attendance for 2017 and 2018 is ~360 people per market.

Impact

Number of people attended Growers & Makers Marketplace:

2016: 444 people with an average of 222

2017: 2160 people with an average of 360

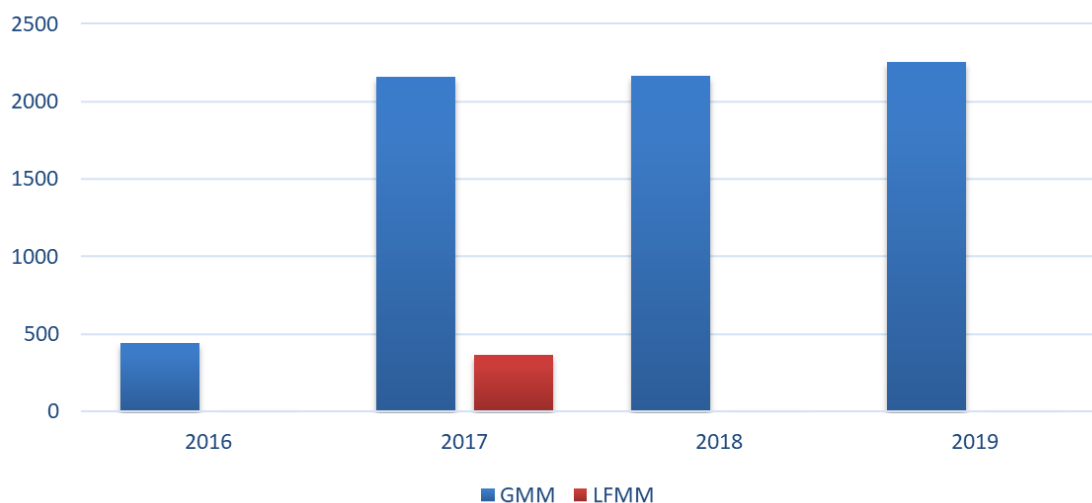
2018: 2168 people with an average of 361

2019: 2254 people with an average of 376

Measure tool: Microsoft Excel workbook updated monthly

Note: Attendance recorded at Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace began manually and eventually changed to electronic door counters (instituted February 25, 2017). While the 2017 report indicated that this measure was conservatively low, given a large margin for manual record collection method. It was determined that data collection was also not accurate with electronic door collection as it was not capturing small children, but inflating counts by dual counting of loading & unloading vendors. The attendance count is now being collected manually with a click counter.

Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace Consumer Attendance



LFMM is a summer market trial. See lessons learned.

Processing Facility Rentals

The USDA licensed processing kitchens offer a location for growers to create value added agricultural products available for sale during the winter when fresh commodities are not an option in cold climate zones such as Minnesota.

Impact

In 2019, Sprout has contracted with two clients to date in a pilot co-packing operation, also known as contract manufacturing. Both clients were food entrepreneurs who were either making their product by hand in a shared use commercial kitchen or in their home kitchen. Both had an interest to step outside of the production process in order to focus on growing sales accounts and developing their brand. Sprout receives frequent inquiries about the contract manufacturing operation and most potential clients are interested in working with Sprout for three main reasons:

1. No minimum production order: Most co-packers have a minimum order that would require such a jump in scale for some small, startup food entrepreneurs, the risk feels too great for their stage of business. Some food entrepreneurs want flexible control of produced quantity in order to continue to develop their product, brand, process, or market, before committing to a large quantity of product. Additionally, cash flow of a minimum order can pose challenges for food entrepreneurs when payments to the co-packer must be made before their product is moved into the marketplace. Some buyers move through multiple rotations of a product before cutting a check to the product owner. Having smaller production numbers can potentially help balance the cash flow cycle for food entrepreneurs, and reduce storage costs of unsold product. Instead of having a minimum production order which invoices based on units produced, Sprout invoices the time it takes to produce a batch, separated into 1) the utilization of kitchen facility and 2) the utilization of Sprout staff.

2. Process and efficiency improvement: As a key component to Sprout's co-packing pilot, the food entrepreneur directly trains Sprout staff in the production process, while Sprout staff document details and time out steps. With each production run, Sprout staff document the minute by minute breakdown of each step to identify areas where either equipment or process changes could improve efficiencies, thus lowering the cost per unit.

3. Food Safety Compliance: Sprout staff maintain food safety trainings to comply with local, state, and federal regulations per the products they produce. Due to the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), Sprout staff completed Preventive Controls Qualified Individual (PCQI) training in order to prepare and implement a food safety plan by a properly trained individual, per the FDA regulation. Because products and their related regulations can be quite specific, Sprout staff has numerous conversations with potential clients to surface required policies and specialized trainings. In Sprout's co-packing pilot, Client A produced a low risk food which required no additional trainings, while Client B produced an acidified food which led to two Sprout staff members obtaining a certificate from the Better Process Control School (BPCS), a course approved by the Food and Drug Administration as well as the United States Department of Agriculture for processors of acidified and low acid canned foods.

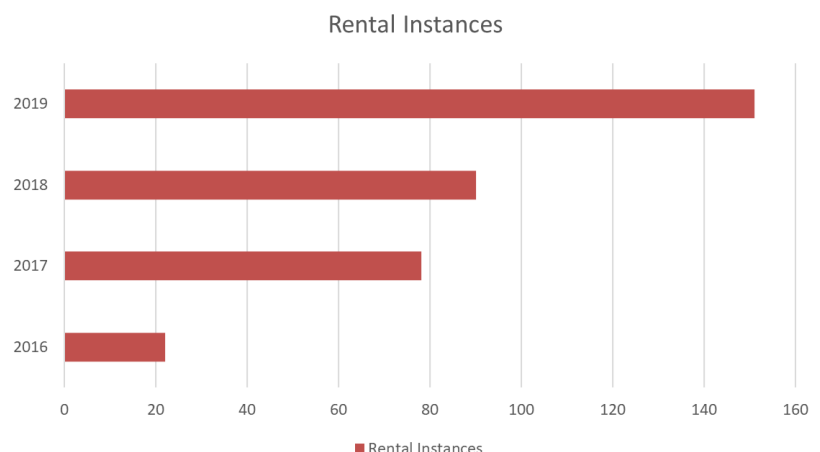
This provided additional revenue for Sprout in not only rental hours for the facility, but also included reimbursement for personnel. Co-packing arrangements, including paid training for Sprout staff, yielded 424 hours of paid staff time. See Lessons Learned.

Additionally, facility utilization included space rental for inventory holding for co-packing customers. Lastly, facility utilization included shelf rental for USDA processed local meat inventory for local growers.

Impact

2016: Sprout Facility had 22 rental instances
 2017: Sprout Facility had 78 rental instances
 2018: Sprout Facility had 90 rental instances
 2019: Sprout Facility had 151 rental instance

Measure tool: QuickBooks and contact management software updated weekly



Mobile Market & Gleaning

The addition of Sprout Mobile Market and produce gleaning (or “Ag rescue”) increases our investment in physical built capital infrastructure and has an overall impact on wealth generation through increased food access points and higher sales. The Mobile Market expansion additionally impacts Sprouts goals that address food insecurity. The intention is to positively shift individual and community health impacts via delivery of fresh commodities to regional food deserts. Through occasional back-filling of the Mobile Market with gleaned foods from farms where end of season commodities would rot on the vine in the fields, the gleaning or “ag rescue” commodities impact our financial and social commitments.

Impact

Number of vehicles & trucks – R5DC and Sprout have secured funding for one mobile market, purchased at the end of 2018 from local vendor (\$51,000.00 investment). Sprout has one delivery van and one mobile market delivery van.

Impact

Points of sales dollars from the Mobile Market reinvested into the local food value chain will also be tracked through 2019 as a measurement of long-term impact.

The Sprout Mobile Market launch was delayed in 2019 due to a variety of reasons. See Lessons Learned.

Impact: Number of Mobile Market transactions: 374

Impact: Revenue generated from Mobile Market: \$3,923.00

Measure tools: QuickBooks finance software updated weekly



Mobile Market:

<https://www.sproutmn.com/media/sprout-hits-the-road-with-new-mobile-market-and-a-la-carte>



Impact

2017: 1,033 pounds of commodities gleaned from Central Lakes College to support RxCSA and Fresh Delivered programs. Total values of commodities, labor and transport: \$1,536.

2018: 2,911 pounds of commodities gleaned from Central Lakes College and local farms to support RxCSA and Morrison County Food Shelf.

2019: 10,688 pounds of commodities gleaned mostly from Central Lakes College, along with one local farm to support CLC Food Service, CLC Student Food Shelf, Staples Food Shelf, local community members, and RxCSA.

Measure tools: CLC Gleaning Coordinator and Microsoft Excel spreadsheet.

Local Contractors

Utilizing locally owned contractors for renovations and development of the Food Hub not only impacts our Built Wealth, but also supports local businesses which in turn looks to support job creation local wealth within our Region.

Impact: Number of local contractors utilized as part of the Sprout Marketplace build out – 19 local contractors were utilized in the build out of the Sprout Marketplace and \$552,000 was spent on the facility.

Sprout continues to invest in local contractors with facility improvements and expanding available services (classroom, electric and plumbing upgrades for kitchen equipment and electric upgrades for commissioned art installation).

2017: \$6,067.65

2018: \$4,350.54

2019: \$3,568.20

Measure tools: QuickBooks accounts payable updated weekly

**Wealth is created by fully functioning infrastructure;
these measures articulate the function of the built capital.**



Trends

Winter months, particularly November and December, continue to see a surge in attendance. The market availability continues to consist of a greater volume of value-added commodities due to the Minnesota climate, a trend we expected.

Building relationships has been paramount from the beginning, parallel to growing demand, and building transactional relationships that lead to economic prosperity and shared ownership. From one grower and one farm, Sprout is now working with over 100 growers in transactional and training relationships through the food hub and in training opportunities. While growers earning market share through the food hub waxes and wanes, it is noted that successful relationships have been forged with over 100 small family farms (many with multiple growers participating in each farm which would indicate the number of growers is much greater) within counties throughout Minnesota.

In addition to working with Amish growers to become licensed by the MDA for egg sales and understanding the Cottage Food Law, we continue to work with growers and food entrepreneurs to become individually licensed to operate the Sprout kitchens. In 2018, Sprout saw three food entrepreneurs utilize Sprout's kitchens, become fully licensed, and move onto their own commercial operation. We also see a trend in utilization of those who value Sprout's facility and not having a deep fryer in order to avoid cross-contamination of their product. Additionally, Sprout has seen a significant spike in interest and utilization by licensed food manufacturers working with CBD products.

In 2019, Sprout entered into co-packing arrangements, which expanded facility utilization, supported staffing, and expanded value-added production as a whole through numerous Twin Cities markets.

Food safety remains a paramount concern across the nation. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture has provided training at numerous statewide locations to educate growers. Sprout does have a representative on the Minnesota Department of Agriculture Produce Safety Advisory Group. It is becoming apparent that is a gap in growers without technology (Amish and Mennonite), and those who may have language barriers. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture is working to address this issue with a goal of 100% of Minnesota growers completing the survey/questionnaire, and in collaboration with numerous food hubs.

Growth of the Marketplace is stagnant between the years of 2018 and 2019, in the number of attendees, the number of vendors, EBT sales, and alternative currency utilization.

Fortuna Alexander | FAH Tea



Evaluation of trends led to lessons learned

- Minimize the number of Summer Events so as not to compete with outdoor farmers markets.
◊ This lesson was exemplified by the trial of Little Falls Mississippi Market.
- Continue to advance economic impact and ripple effect knowledge, education and marketing to increase, enhance, advise, and propel market sales for growers and makers and increase marketplace cohesion of vendors through technical assistance, education, and business knowledge to increase sales.
◊ In a recent end of market survey (December 2019), only three vendors indicated they had attended the business development and technical assistance opportunities at Sprout. Many vendors indicated that their participation in Sprout marketplace has advanced sales, created new relationships, new revenue opportunities and increased vendor cohesion. At the time of this report, only one vendor has utilized the licensed facility for value-added capacity.
- Culturally focused (Amish, Latino, East African, Native American, youth, grower) Sprout Marketplace events such as music and cooking demonstrations and food tasting specific to the featured culture drew people in.
◊ The most diversified markets have the greatest consumer participation; however, it is noted that the audience is increased by specific cultural groups. It is critical to engage the communities served to advance economic opportunities for growers and makers within those communities, but also to draw consumers to the marketplace.
- Co-packing: Co-packing is not only an excellent opportunity to build capacity into facility utilization (both facility use and staffing), it builds capacity for small food entrepreneurs as listed above. The learning curve for processing individual products to specifications is high. However, the numerous steps involved in identifying efficiencies is critical for both food production and food safety. These co-packing arrangements continue to be modified to meet the need of the customer as Sprout's ultimate goal is to build markets for food entrepreneurs.
- Initially, the mobile market launch was designed to incorporate back-filling, or back-hauling. Once equipment had been ordered and installed, (refrigeration, freezer, shelving, point of sale, rolling racks), all square footage in the mobile market was essentially utilized. All of these pieces of equipment were necessary in order to fulfill requirements for SNAP/EBT with an inventory beyond produce. Numerous new contacts were made with meat, cheese and dairy growers; research on vendor agreements and delivery logistics were necessary in order to purchase local products from vendors including Co-op Partners and Stony Creek Dairy; and vehicle registration became part of the MNLARS debacle. Additionally, logistics in agreements with site hosts and electrical hook ups for refrigeration took more time than estimated.
- Growth of the Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace is flat for the period of 2018-2019. This can be attributed to space utilization and expansion of vendors due to space. While a high amount of funds has been utilized to market the opportunities to the public, growth in attendees is also stagnant. In order to continue to grow the markets, Sprout will need to engage in strategies that increase both vendor count and attendee count.



2. FINANCIAL WEALTH

Financial wealth as a success metric to wealth generation are responsible investments that generate additional income, as well as the elimination of unnecessary cost or waste in providing public goods and services.

Through financial wealth we offer opportunities to invest gains in ways that increase and improve the quality of all the other seven forms of wealth. By investing in access to financial capital our local food value chain growers and artists can find resources to assist in the overall success of their businesses and thus, regional financial wellbeing.

Within this project we measured and tracked the following to determine the success of our Financial Wealth creation:

MEASUREMENTS OF SUCCESS:

- Number of investments
- Number of enterprises created or expanded
- Local food value chain reinvestment
 - R5DC Microlending – \$\$ leveraged, Number of jobs created or retained
 - Sprout Marketplace – \$\$ secured via grants/loans, \$\$ in sales, Number jobs created or retained through Sprout Food Hub (part of the value chain) vegetable sales
 - Crowdfunding – \$\$ secured through social crowdfunding

Microlending

Region Five Development Commission (R5DC) tracked microlending dollars of a lending program that targets growers and artists as an underserved population.

Impacts

Through 2017, leveraged \$106,200.00 in microloans which were distributed to three different local businesses from May 2012 to March 2017. These microloans not only allowed these businesses to invest in income generating activities, but also promoted job creation with 14 additional jobs created and 2 jobs retained.

2018: An additional \$50,000.00 in microloans was leveraged to two additional businesses. These microloans not only allowed these businesses to invest in income generating activities, but also promoted job creation with an additional 7 jobs created and 2 jobs retained. Measure Tool: Portfol Lending Software updated daily

2019 – An additional \$431,351.00 in microloans were leveraged to 8 businesses.

Measure tool: Portfol Lending Software updated daily

Jobs via GAP Lending

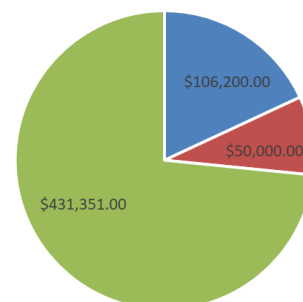
R5DC job creation and job retention was tracked as an output of financial lending programs through this project.

Through 2019 – Seventy-nine jobs were created and thirty-nine retained as a result of ALL business lending.

It is critical to note that these investments were all small businesses directly related to the local food value chain.

Measure Tool: Portfol Lending Software updated daily

R5DC Local Foods Investments Through Microloans



50% of interest on loans reinvested into the different lending pools to offer future lending opportunities.

■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019

Jobs via business growth

Sprout Food Hub Job creation and job retention are tracked by increase in FTE for Sprout Food Hub as it advances its operations.

Impact: Sprout added 3.9 FTE since buildout.

Measure tool: Payroll Accounting

Jobs via business growth is also measured by the number of growers who sold commodities to Sprout.

Impact: Since the 2014, the Food Hub has sold \$527,040.10 worth of produce, sourced from a cumulative total of over 100 growers who operate small farms. Many of these growers are low-income operations, (and this subsidizes household income), or are traditional farmers who have not had access to markets. Sprout specializes in working with a high population of Amish community members, and subsidizes their operations by providing most of the transport of the commodities. Sprout does charge a 5% of total order charge to slightly cover staffing and overhead.

Impact: In 2018, Sprout spent a total of 138.5 hours transporting these commodities.

In 2019, Sprout spent a total of 153.75 hours transporting these commodities with an assigned value of \$5,697.19 of Sprout staff time and asset utilization overhead.

Impact: An average of 100,000 pounds of commodities has been sourced annually since 2014.

Measure tool: QuickBooks finance software updated daily

Sales

Sprout sales dollars generated as additional income was tracked from all funds (with the exception of food hub sales):

Impact

As a direct result of built infrastructure, i.e., built facility:

From 2016 through 2017, a total of \$20,284.36 in revenue was generated.

2018: A total of \$36,241.14 in revenue was generated.

2019: A total of \$48,650.76 in revenue was generated.

Measure tool: QuickBooks finance software updated daily

Sales Category	Sales Dollars 2012-2017	Sales Dollars 2018	Sales Dollars 2019
Summer Harvest	\$ 1,560.00	\$ 2,066.59	\$ 3,210.12
MINCED: The Finer Version of Chopped		\$ 2,002.00	\$ 3,385.71
Facility Utilization	\$ 7,237.50	\$ 16,821.22	\$ 16,585.44
Vendor Booth Fees	\$ 5,040.00	\$ 12,375.00	\$ 16,141.00
Food Hub Sales	\$347,833.00	\$88,272.61	\$90,934.49
Co-Packing			\$ 9,328.49
TOTAL	\$361,670.50	\$121,537.42	\$139,585.25
Sales Due to Facility Investment	\$20,284.36	\$36,241.14	\$48,650.76



Snapshot of Marketplace food sales:

Erik Heimark of Maple Ridge Produce grows produce and bakes specialty breads. His farm was a vendor at the 2019 markets. Erik indicates that during the 6 market opportunities at Sprout, his farm netted \$1,795.53 in sales. In addition, he sold \$1,017.00 in sales to the Sprout Food Hub. A direct result of interactions at the marketplace, Erik also formed relationships with local executive chefs. These relationships netted Erik an additional \$4,287.10 in sales – totaling \$7,099.63 as a direct result of his relationships with Sprout. Erik indicates that as a result of these sales, he was able to purchase new equipment to scale up his operations.

Total Dollars Secured

In grants and loans from foundations and state and federal agencies that were used in the facility build out were tracked as not only an investment in financial capital, but generated additional income for those businesses contracted for services.

Impact

- 2013 - 2017: \$1,506,500.00 has been secured from grants and loans.
- 2018: \$263,247.00 was secured to advance Sprout's operations
- 2019: \$197,200.00 was secured to advance the RxCSA programs for Veteran's and those in recovery, along with funds for organizational development and general operational support.

\$1,966,947.00 as of December 31, 2019 in support of the local foods value chain.

Measure tool: Microsoft Excel workbook updated quarterly

Crowdfunding

Region Five Development Commission launched a new regional social crowdfunding initiative through MNStarter in 2018. The goal for the Spout 2018 Social Crowdfunding Campaign was \$50,000.00.

Impact

Crowdfunding total awareness/fundraising campaign for 2018: \$7,147.00. This includes the \$2,002 raised from MINCED: The Finer Version of Chopped, which was the launch event for the campaign. Technical improvements were made to the MNStarter platform due to Sprout staff troubleshooting issues that arose during the campaign.

Measure tool: MNStarter, QuickBooks, Microsoft Excel workbook and R5DC accounting.

Trends

Access to capital continues to be a struggle for small businesses. Offering crowdfunding programs, as well as microloans provides business owners more flexibility and option for access. As a nonprofit, Sprout has secured numerous grants, and continues to strive to provide outcomes that allow these significant relationships to address issues related to our mission, vision and values.

Numerous funders are recognizing the value of local foods in building equitable economic ecosystems. This has helped shape Sprout and its partners intentions in the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work around the entire region. Much of Sprout's 2019 and 2020 funding has been provided by state family foundations that recognize the cultural importance of storytelling, sharing and shaping our intellectual and individual capitals, growth through environmental sustainability, intention on equity, and bridging these gaps through utilization of local foods.

Evaluation of trends led to lessons learned

Diversifying Sprout's financial portfolio and incorporating the multiple forms of wealth is a strategy that is essential to the successes to date. Asking "who else cares" opened up more funding options and brought in partners that may not have been thought of without modeling the WealthWorks capitals.

Crowdfunding was a difficult challenge in working with a new platform. Numerous glitches were identified, and Sprout staff played a large role in identifying and working with MN Starter staff. Unfortunately, this platform did not succeed.

The historical role of R5DC being the primary grant fiscal host transitioned to Sprout and these efforts increased organizational capacity of both organizations. Both organizations understand that we play the role we need to for regional and value chain success, and that future roles may change as needs and capacity change. The lesson is that we are in this work together for the long haul and respect each other's contributions tremendously.

It continues to be the case that Sprout is a rural-to-rural food hub. This is intentional. It is fully recognized that financial sustainability for Sprout will continue to be gauged on the concept that local foods alone, and its small margins, will not sustain the complexity of operations. Facility utilization of the licensed kitchens is paramount. Meeting the social mission of Sprout remains a high priority, and efforts will continue to be focused on the goals of building equitable economic ecosystems through diversity, equity and inclusion with a goal of fully representing the communities we serve.

3. INTELLECTUAL WEALTH

Stock of knowledge, innovation, and creativity or imagination in a region.

The knowledge, creativity, and innovation needed to solve problems and develop new ways of doing things. Investment in intellectual capital is through research and development and support for activities that increase innovation, as well as diffusion of new knowledge and applications. It can come from sharing with other people and communities.

Our challenges that prevent wealth creation are frequently financial, social or environmental. Through built intellectual assets we increase the available human capacity from diverse world views that bring abilities to solve financial, environmental and social challenges. By investing in intellectual capital, our local food value chain can quickly react to economic and environmental shifts, allowing a sustainable approach to wealth creation.

Within this project we measured and tracked the following to determine the success of our Intellectual Wealth creation:

MEASUREMENTS OF SUCCESS:

- Number of new partners connecting to Sprout local food value chain ideas
- Number of producers
 - Local Food Value Chain – Number of networks connecting to the WW model
 - Sprout Marketplace – Number of businesses technical assistance was delivered to
 - Á la cARTe Initiative – Investment in the local foods value chain through art new for 2019

Networks Engaged – The number of networks connecting to the Wealth Works framework or ideas.

Impact

2016-2017: 13 different organizations or networks have been connected to the WealthWorks framework. These networks allow the sharing of ideas and best practices that increase our intellectual wealth within the region.

2018: 3 additional partners/networks - Four Corners Economic Development (New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado and Utah), NADO 2018 Conference in North Carolina, and Growing Acres Conference in Minnesota - have been connected to the Wealth Works framework; these networks allow the sharing of ideas and best practices that increase our intellectual wealth within the region.

2019: Four additional partners/networks: Rural Renewable Energy Alliance, Happy Dancing Turtle, City of Little Falls and Five Wings Arts Council – all located in Minnesota. {Measure tool: Microsoft Excel documented lists, updated monthly}

These are organizations or networks have been connected to the Wealth Works framework. These networks allow the sharing of ideas and best practices that increase our intellectual wealth within the Region.

“Being able to experience and understand the WealthWorks framework has completely changed the way Sourcewell operates our Innovation Funding process. We were able to use the WealthWorks framework to help ensure that projects that we are funding are including all of the community capitals and in turn building wealth. We revamped our scoring process to ensure that each project is scored against the 8 capitals, in hopes that we would fund projects that are more collaborative, holistic, and community built. This has resulted in applications that are much stronger, longer-lasting, and have region-wide impact that can be felt for years to come. We could not have improved our Innovation Funding process without the WealthWorks framework.”

Anna Gruber
Manager of City & County Solutions, Sourcewell
Staples, Minnesota

Networks Connecting to Wealth Works

- MN Learning Community
- 6 Wealth Works Hubs
- Minnesota Association of Development Organizations (MADO)
- Growth & Justice
- Food Funders Network
- Regional/Rural Economic Development Group (RED)
- Sourcewell (formerly National Joint Powers Alliance)
- USDA
- MN Department of Agriculture
- Northwest Area Foundation Board of Trustees (OR)
- NADO Transportation Conference 2017 (CO)
- NADO Annual Training Conference 2017 (AK)
- RUPRI- Delta Regional Authority (AL, MS, LA)
- Four Corners Presentation 2017 (NM, CO, UT, AZ)
- NADO Conference 2018 North Carolina
- Growing Acres Conference, 2018, Minnesota
- Rural Renewal Energy Alliance (RREAL)
- Happy Dancing Turtle (HDT)
- Central Minnesota Regional Food Cooperatives Group
- City of Little Falls
- Five Wings Art Council - Regional Arts Council

Technical Assistance

The number of businesses that participated in TA Training /Workshops was measured.

Impact

2017: There were 4 classes offered with a total of 80 individuals attending. Classes with the largest attendance revolved around business basics and best practices.

2018: There were 8 classes offered with a total of 162 individuals attending. Classes with the largest attendance continue to be those about business and best practices. These classes were selected on the basis of customer demand. This continues to be a key lesson as we look to increase class size based on demands of individual small businesses.

2019: There were 13 classes offered with a total of 209 individuals attending. While the general number of attendees has increased overall, the class with the highest attendance was focused on environmental sustainability.

Workshops & Training

Date	Workshop Name	Number of Participants
5/9/2017	3-Hour Grant Writing and Evaluation Workshop for Artists, Growers, & Makers	28
7/11/2017	The Art of Entrepreneur: Business Basics for Growers, Makers & Artists	33
9/23/2017	Work of Art: Career Planning for Artists and Makers 10am Session	11
9/23/2017	Work of Art: Career Planning for Artists and Makers 1:30 pm Session	8
Total 2017 Workshop Participants		80
1/16/2018	Greenhouse 101	31
2/20/2018	Greenhouse 101	17
3/20/2018	Digital Marketing & Social Media for Busy Small Farms	19
4/10/2018	Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) FSMA Training Course	30
4/26/2018	Growing and Marketing Minnesota Garlic	25
5/12/2018	One Day MBA Workshop	10
9/26/2018	Network/Learn: Bringing Business & Artists Together	16
10/26/2018	True About You: A Storytelling Workshop with Amy Salloway	14
Total 2018 Workshop Participants		162
4/6/2019	Belly Dancing: Megg Shepard	13
4/15/2019	Quickbooks 101: Nathan Converse	21
4/29/2019	Community Art for Artists: Vicky Chepulis	16
5/4/2019	Quickbooks 201: Nathan Converse	8
6/1/2019	Belly Dancing: Megg Shepard	12
6/5/2019	Belly Dancing: Megg Shepard	12
6/5/2019	Zero Waste: Stephanie Chatfield Wall	76
6/20/2019	Market Expansion: Nicole Chimbetete	11
7/17/2019	Food Hub Finance Boot Camp	10
7/18/2019	Food Hub Finance Boot Camp	9
7/18/2019	WealthWorks Evaluation: Dawn Espe	6
9/19/2019	Human Resources and Retention: Amy Sjoblad	5
11/19/2019	Grant Writing: Cheryal Lee Hills	10
Total 2019 Workshop Participants		209

Á la cARTE Initiative:

In 2019, Sprout secured funding to advance the Á la cARTE Initiative. A cohort of four artists were chosen to enhance the Mobile Market shopping experience, as well as various community events, through the use of portable artist studios. These portable studios, called “Á la cARTEs” will be used to engage the community through art and food, with an end goal of lasting healthy behavior changes that support physical and mental wellbeing. The Á la cARTEs were designed, fabricated, owned and managed by individual artists or artist collaboratives that represent diverse art forms. Artists have increased their capacity through use of the carts and through the relationships created throughout this project. Numerous communities have experienced an increase in food and arts accessibility due to the mobile nature of the carts and the market.

Impact

2019 – Four artists have mobile art studios. They have engaged the community on 13 separate events in 2019 and have increased arts accessibility to 639 Á la cARTE participants.



Snapshot of Á la cARTE Initiative:

“There was one little boy who was absolutely fascinated by every little thing we were doing. He tried his hand at wet-felting, carding, wrapping a wood lamb with yarn, and spent a lot of time talking to me and my helpers about the art and the art cart. He helped card a batt of wool and I gave him a piece to take home. The smile on his face was priceless.”

Lisa Jordan, Lil Fish Studios, Felting Artist



Trends

Continue to build opportunities for like-trade people to gather and learn from experts as well as one another. Classes tend to draw more participants from the grower perspective. Survey results continue to indicate a strong desire for business training, including QuickBooks. Sprout and its partners will focus on this for 2019.

Additionally, Sprout partnered with Region Five Development Commission in deploying technical assistance through Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Good Food Access Program for Technical Assistance. While these training opportunities were identified for small food access points and food cooperatives, they were open to the general public and held at Sprout. Attendees included a diverse range of small food access points, food cooperatives, and artists.

Evaluation of trends led to lessons learned

As indicated in previous reports, many artists in the region do not appear to identify as artists, but rather as makers, fabricators, or crafts people. These same artists voice a lack of community for their craft in rural regions, which the Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace and workshops attempt to address. As intellectual capital is built during workshops, so too is social capital, building camaraderie within the communities served. The *Á la CARTE* Initiative is a key example of engaging community through art to advance the local food value chain.

As part of a paper survey for evaluation of the last Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace, Sprout surveyed all vendors at the December 2019 market. Of the 44 in attendance, 23 returned the survey. Only three vendors indicated that they had participated in the technical assistance at Sprout, indicating a greater turnout from the general public.

As environmental issues continue to evolve, interest in these issues is paramount as evidenced by the turnout of the Zero Waste workshop. These opportunities continue to exemplify a cultural shift towards environmental education, participation and action.

Valeria Evans - African Scene Triptych at March 2019 Marketplace



4. INDIVIDUAL WEALTH

Stock of skills and physical and mental healthiness of people in the Region.

The skills and capacity, including health, that allow individuals to be productive. Investments in human capital include spending on skill development, education, training, and health maintenance and improvement.

This report previously explains how Intellectual capital is the stock of knowledge gained by people to benefit the regional local food value chain overall, while Individual assets are the stock of individual skills and how the stock is used to create physical and mental health changes one person at a time. Individual assets are training and education that lead to action for individuals. Intellectual/community knowledge gain – vs – Individual/physical or mental gain of one person. By investing in individual assets, we can measure positive behavioral changes.

Within this project we measured and tracked the following to determine the success of our Individual Wealth creation:

MEASUREMENTS OF SUCCESS:

- Change in behavior due to new skills
- Increased engagement in local food value chain activities
- Number of jobs (seasonal or year-round)
- Sales revenue to producers
- Sprout – Regional Rx CSA programs - Number people/families participating, & Number meals – that close the missing meal gap to those families

Nutrition Education & Demos - The number of people who participated in the RxCSA program:

Impact: Since 2014, 1,095 participants and approximately 3,974 Household Members.

Measure tool: Microsoft Excel workbook updated monthly

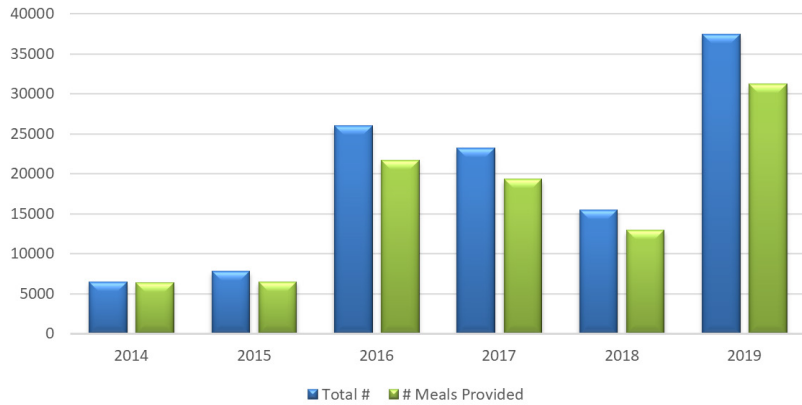
Number of Participants			
Year	Participants Summer	Participants Winter	Household Members
2014	50	0	175
2015	80	0	455
2016	125	143	1,073
2017	175	149	1,216
2018	160	0	620
2019	125	88	435
Totals	715	380	3,974



Total Participants (summer and winter) 2014-2019 = 1,095

Note: Three Hospital Systems (Lakewood Health Systems, St. Gabriel’s Hospital and CentreCare Long Prairie) participated in both summer shares and winter shares and the participants are by count of shares, and are duplicative. These numbers are based on the number of shares per summer/winter shares. Due to HIPPA, Sprout was not able to keep track of participants for the purpose of delineating unique numbers. For 2019, no hospital system is engaged and all programs are coordinated by Sprout.

Rx CSA Pounds Provided and Meals Provided



Number Meals Served from 2014 - 2019

Impact

Total pounds of local commodities through RxCSA programs equals **116,512 lbs.**, translating into **97,093 meals** that close the missing meal gap.



Snapshot: Ole Lake Farms, Debby Flowers:

Debby has been one of the featured growers in numerous Sprout Growers & Maker's Marketplace. She is also a featured grower in our video series: https://youtu.be/_KXJD2a685g

At a recent market, Debby reported: "Sprout has been great for my business! I have connected with other businesses and found wholesale opportunities, return customers and new market referrals. Sprout purchases my product too, which helps to expand my brand to new customers. Sales to the subscription box program (CSA) sends my products out further, flour sales to bakers, and sales potential to the new co-op too."



Sprout Cooking Classes

Number of classes and number of attendees – these measures meet both intellectual (skill building) & individual (health/ wellness).

Date	Class Name	Attendees
03/28/19	Sushi	32
04/27/19	Kids Kitchen	21
05/01/19	Pasta	30
05/15/19	Tri-Valley Opportunity Council – Food Service	40
05/16/19	Tri-Valley Opportunity Council – Food Service	40
05/22/19	Art of Grilling	11
08/21/19	Wild Cooking	8
10/03/19	Soul Food	5
11/07/19	Soul Food	7
11/14/19	Friendsgiving	30
12/04/19	Soul Food	4



Total 2019 Cooking Class Participants

228

Trends

The region's first "prescribed" CSA programs (Rx CSA) were in collaboration with three regional hospital systems: Lakewood Health Systems in Staples, MN (Choose Health), St. Gabriel's Hospital in Little Falls, MN (Eat Smart) and CentreCare in Long Prairie, MN (B.L.E.N.D.). These programs were sustained primarily through grant funding each regional hospital received. These programs provided healthy foods - twice monthly – along with recipes, food demonstrations and education to local families who have been identified as food insecure by physicians from health care providers. Participants partook in an extensive process of pre and post health care screenings, received nutrition education and recipes from the University of Minnesota Extension, **alongside a concentrated community referral process and ongoing support offered by County Public Health and educational institutions. Families receive locally grown and raised commodities bi-monthly from Sprout, adding to the income of the region's small family farms.**

Initial pilot results showed an improvement in the amount of fruits and vegetables participant families were eating, cooking more meals at home, thinking about the nutritional value of foods when shopping, connecting as a family, and comparing food prices. These indicators showed improved health outcomes. Stigma of health deprived program participants in our rural small towns was minimized by getting other local companies to purchase CSA memberships for employees who had performed well in employee wellness programs. Everyone stood side by side to receive training and food shares.

These programs were not sustained utilizing the CSA model, which was a direct benefit to Sprout and its regional growers. While showing promising results in health improvement, intellectual and individual capacity to utilize local foods, along with social cohesion in sharing experiences with fellow participants, grant funding was not sustained and these programs dissolved.

Additionally, as a direct result of surveys, participant observations, and healthcare professionals, two populations were identified as overlooked. These were target populations who could benefit from these types of high-touch programming using food as medicine.

In 2019, in partnership with Region Five Development Commission, programs were launched for 50 Veteran families and 20 families experiencing substance abuse/drug addiction recovery and those who are working to increase adaptation and lifestyle capacity with limited resources while coping with mental illness. Referrals for the Veteran's Program largely came in from the region's five county Veteran Services Officers and referrals for the Eat Well Be Well Program were largely received from community mental health centers and regional county attorney offices. See Political Capital.

Soul Food is a newly launched collaboration between Sprout and a local long-term care facility. This collaboration is an effort to build capacity for caregivers in meal preparation. Once a month, Sprout staff lead a cooking workshop, preparing meals in bulk for participants to take home and freeze, alleviating everyday cooking and providing a form of respite for caregivers.

Evaluation of trends led to lessons learned

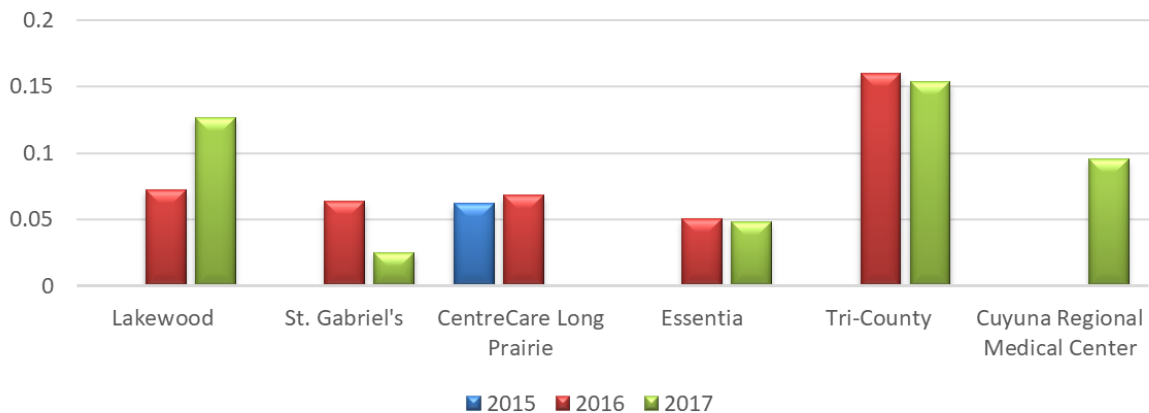
The collaboration between Sprout, healthcare systems, public health, University of Minnesota Extension services, and volunteers consumed a considerable amount of time. The outcomes of these programs have shown significant trends in health improvement including weight loss, decreased BMI, self-skills in food budgets, preparation and increased time eating at a table as a family without television and electronics. Sustainability of these programs remains an issue as they are grant funded. While hospital systems have supported these programs in significant portion with administrative and coordinated support, they have not taken advantage of tax advantages for nutritional access.

Provisions of the Affordable Care Act of 2010 encouraged tax-exempt hospitals to invest broadly in community health benefits. As a result of the Affordable Care Act of 2010, the general idea was that with more citizens insured, hospital organizations would have less unreimbursed expense. Therefore, investing in communities utilizing the Community Health Needs Assessment was seen as a vehicle to increase charity care. In a report in Health Affairs, published January of 2018, hospitals have increased their average spending for all community benefits by a mere 0.6% (from 7.5% of their operating expenses in 2010 to 8.1% in 2014).

(source: <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/abs/10.1377/hlthaff.2017.1028?journalCode=hlthaff>)

Tax-exempt hospitals are required to report their community benefit dollars on IRS form 990, Schedule H, which is available for public review. (source: www.communitybenefitinsight.org)

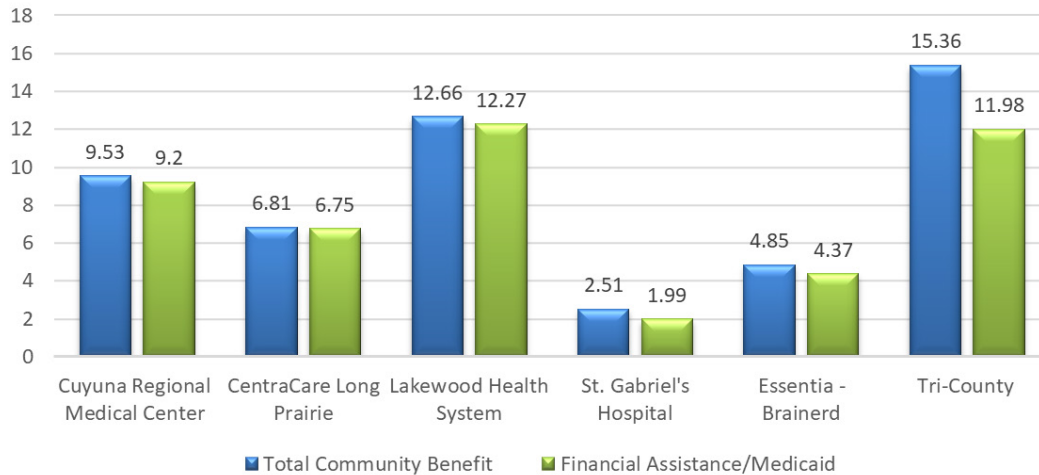
Percent of Total Community Benefit Spending Compared to Operating Expenses by Not For Profit Hospitals in Central Minnesota Indicated by Tax Year



*Note, Cuyuna Regional Medical Center data only available for 2017.



Total Community Benefit: Total Benefit back to hospital system for uninsured/underinsured by %



The above chart clearly indicates the disparity in funding back into the region's rural communities. Almost in an equal amount across regional facilities, reimbursement is back to the facility for uninsured care and/or underinsured care.

Community Health Needs Assessments, required by the Affordable Care Act, are to be completed every three years. Sprout advocates for these assessments to not only include collaboration between healthcare systems, but with other non-healthcare community partners in a cross sector whole patient system. Community Health Needs Assessments are a tool which can be used to help healthcare systems access additional community support systems to address obesity, diabetes, heart disease and other food related diseases. More importantly, Sprout has witnessed the impact of social connectedness through these viable programs in providing intellectual, social and cultural capital through shared experiences and advancing skills, connectedness through meal sharing and educational opportunities. We recognize that the vast majority of profits from our regional hospital system are re-invested in the hospital systems and NOT fully integrated into advancing processes that have a community return on investment. Review of Schedule H fully reveals that simply participating on community boards and capturing revenue towards space rental does not meet the *intended* requirements of the Community Health Needs Assessment. Sprout and its community partners continue to recognize that investing in human capital through local food is a worthwhile investment, that could and should be increased.



5. NATURAL WEALTH

Stock of unimpaired environmental assets (e.g. air, water, land, flora, fauna, etc.) in a region. Not causing harm.

The productive environmental assets (e.g., air, water, land, minerals, plants, animals, fish, ecosystem services) in a region. Investments in natural capital include restoration and maintenance.

A balanced retention of natural assets impacts the ability to produce products and goods that further impact our financial growth. The cost to preserve environmental assets is a cost savings compared to restoration expenses. By preserving our farmland and deploying good agricultural practices we retain the asset that allows local food value chains to prosper.

Within this project we measured and tracked the following to determine the success of our Natural Wealth creation:

MEASUREMENTS OF SUCCESS:

- Number of acres meeting local food value chain goals (production, conservation or restored)
- Sustainable business practices adopted by businesses or number of businesses increasing use of sustainable practices.
 - Sprout Food Hub – Number of acres, number & sq. ft. of solar thermal high tunnels in use

Impact

Farmland preserved- the number of acres of farmland preserved by growers engaged in the local food value chain as demonstrated by additional acreage in production, expansion via high tunnels, and continuing to remain on their land in agricultural production:

2017: 3,767.35 acres of farmland has been preserved and 585.01 additional acres are in production.

2018: 4,341.15 acres of farmland has been preserved and 615.01 acres in production.

2019: 5,855.68 acres of farmland has been preserved and 1,548.76 acres in production.

Impact

High Tunnels Season Expansion - utilized to extend growing season in cold climate zones. High Tunnel season expansion offer additional financial grower impacts.

2017: 39 high tunnels with a total high tunnel square footage of 65,123 (two solar tunnels)

2018: 53 high tunnels (one 576 square feet deep winter greenhouse in collaboration with the University of Minnesota) with an additional 5,820 square feet of high tunnel square footage for a total of 82,703 square feet

2019: 3 high tunnels added with an additional 7,980 square feet of high tunnel square footage for a total of 90,683 square feet

Measure tool: Grower Survey and Microsoft Excel Workbook updated monthly

Featured Women Growers at Summer Harvest Dinner 2019



Left to right: Carla Mertz (Iron Shoe Farm), Debby Flowers (Ole Lake Farm), Liz Dwyer (Dancing the Land Farm)

Trends

It continues to be the case that many small family farmers are eager to provide products when there is a structured market channel for growers. One of the most concerning trends is the aging out of many growers Sprout has worked with since inception, and the increasing difficulties in young farmers gaining access to capital to own land. We have also seen a substantial increase in the number of farms operated primarily by women. As stated, numerous times throughout this report, Sprout calculates the number the growers based on a cumulative record. Trends revealed in the last two years show the majority of primary growers participating in the wholesale channel through Sprout are Amish or farms primarily operated by women.

It continues to be the case that due to Minnesota's agricultural climate, numerous growers are moving towards climate controlled growing practices, as indicated in the numbers above. It also remains the case that a majority of Sprout's growers are continuing to move to organic and/or sustainable growing practices, which lends itself to protecting the natural capital and addressing increasing concerns about environmental sustainability.

Evaluation of trended to lessons learned

Scaling up and instituting additional practices oftentimes requires access to additional capital. With Minnesota's climate, it is difficult to produce year-round. Therefore, protecting and growing market channels is vital to protecting the ability to project revenue and income. On the supply side of the value chain, Sprout continues to invest significant resources into strategies for improving production with growers and providing technical assistance to growers. On the demand side, Sprout continues to invest personnel resources into meetings with buyers, with particular emphasis on strategies for buyer's scaling up, practicing true seasonality, and learning to preserve commodities when they are in season. Education to purchasing agents of local commodities is seen as one of the most valuable resources of time for Sprout and other regional food hubs. The calendar date is not an indicator of product availability, and as summer waxes and wanes, buyers must understand that growers have invested significant resources into season extension. Menus must represent the continued availability of products – and traditional summer products must continue to be center stage on menus until they are no longer available. An example of this is that when the region's fields freeze, growers still have tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, eggplant, and other products available due to that investment in infrastructure, and fall crops such as carrots, potatoes, cabbage, and squash have a high storage life.

Dancing the Land Farm

“Agriculture done well heals. Agriculture done poorly degrades. Degrades our water. Degrades our soil. Degrades our health. Degrades our rural communities.”
– Jim Chamberlin
Island Lake Farm



6. POLITICAL WEALTH

Stock of power and goodwill held by individuals, groups, and/or organizations that can be held, spent or shared to achieve desired ends.

The voice, power and influence over decisions needed to achieve your goals, including the distribution of resources. Investments in political capital are made through inclusive organizing – gathering and disseminating information, providing access to decision makers, creating broader constituencies and increased voice.

Political wealth relates to increasing system changes that benefit the local food value chain. These could be municipal law or ordinance changes, they could also be company policy changes or a shift in practice. Political capital of a local food value chain could translate into a shift of language we see in local comprehensive plans or ordinance changes that benefit local growers or how we are able to display public art that reflects our regional culture, it could look like a change to a funding program or an application process that would benefit local growers who have not participated in the agricultural economy in the past.

Within this project we measured and tracked the following to determine the success of our Political Wealth creation:

MEASUREMENTS OF SUCCESS:

- Number of organizations and networks engaged in supporting the policy change aligned with local food value chain strategies or goals
- Number of policies and programs supporting local food value chain
- Number of low-income minority in decision-making positions involved local food value chain work
 - Sprout – Number of non-English applications
 - Minnesota Department of Agriculture – Number programs and agencies changed
- Number of community opportunities to provide access to community decision making new for 2019

Organizations and Networks Engaged

Sprout team members participate in the following groups and/or agencies in efforts to impact policy change to strengthen the local foods value chain across the state:

Impact 2018

- Minnesota Food Charter Food Hub Action Team
- Minnesota Department of Agriculture Produce Safety Alliance
- Good Food Access Committee Strategic Planning Group (capacity to lobby)
- Farm to School and Early Childhood Care Strategic Planning and Policy Lead Team (capacity to lobby)
- Central Minnesota Meat Processing Facility Feasibility Study Team

Impact 2019

- Minnesota Farmer's Union Leadership Fellow
- Young Farmer's Coalition
- Agriculture Utilization Research Institute Industry Thought Leader

Local Change

Sprout translated vendor application in Spanish. In addition, the Sprout Marketplace flyer was also translated to Spanish.

2017: Number Non-English applications 1 Spanish application submitted in 2017, to become a vendor at the Sprout Marketplace.

2018: Artist Agreement, Vendor Agreement and Vendor Application now in Spanish with one application received in Spanish.

2019: Posters and training manuals converted to Spanish for Our Town NEA grant award.

Measure tool: Microsoft Excel Workbook updated annually



State Agency Change

Other program and agencies changed that added value to the social assets. As a member of the Advisory Committee to the MDA Good Food Access Program, Region Five Development Commission offered the idea to accept grant applications in other languages, offering non-English speaking residents' greater access to the program opportunity. MDA's Commissioner David Fredrickson approved the recommendation, and this was the first time that a State agency accepted grant applications in any language other than English.

Impact

- 2017: 1 Spanish application accepted by Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA)
- 2018: Minnesota Department of Agriculture considering offering trainings for Produce Safety in Spanish.
- 2019: Two trainings delivered in Spanish for the Minnesota Department of Agriculture Produce Safety Alliance training
All material is printed in Hmong and Spanish.

Measure tool: Microsoft Excel Workbook updated annually

Systems Change

These examples benefit the Local Food Value Chain, creating broader constituencies and increased voice

Impact

In 2019, Sprout led the effort for the City of Little Falls to participate in an EPA sponsored Local Foods, Local Places Technical Assistance opportunity. A total of 66 Little Falls residents gathered for a two-day workshop to create a community action plan to create more economic opportunities for local farmers and businesses, create better access to healthy local food (especially for disadvantaged groups), and to revitalize downtown. The Community Action Plan includes five specific goals to guide the community in implementation and vision of the goals that were established.

Impact

In 2019, Sprout is one of three entities (along with the City of Little Falls and Five Wings Arts Council) working together to advance a National Endowment of the Arts Our Town grant in an 18-month initiative to designed to use food and art to build a culture of collaboration. A Community Visioning process will be used to discern and articulate a community vision and road map to navigate the future of Little Falls, building on the Community Action Plan created by Local Foods, Local Places initiative. At the time of this 2019 report, a 27-member Steering Committee has been developed to broadly represent all sectors of the community in this process.

Impact

In 2019, City Administrator of Little Falls, Jon Radermacher and Executive Director of Sprout, Arlene Jones, met with Lead for America to apply for a Fellow to work with the City of Little Falls and other community partners to identify existing financial, human, social and cultural resources, community collaborations, and funding/capital to support and advance priority projects identified through the Our Town and Local Foods, Local Places community engagement and listening processes. At the time of this 2019 report, the application has been widely received with candidate interviews.

Trends

As the work of the food hub advances in the region with non-English speaking growers, Sprout has strived to hire translators to convert its applications and event posters into multiple languages, beginning with Spanish. Sprout has also hired translators to be available during marketplace events in order for community guest chefs to speak their primary language. As a result of its statewide engagement in agricultural programs, R5DC was able to move the dial within state programs to accept applications in a language other than English. Additionally, the region has seen increased multilingual signage available through numerous business partners.

Due to the success of states such as Michigan and Oregon in building sustainability into local foods, Minnesota partners such as American Heart Association, Hunger Solutions, Land Stewardship Program, Renewing the Countryside, and numerous food hubs have invested significant resources in building local foods value chains through policy (with specific focus on grant funding/ access to capital and Farm to School Policy). The first Farm to School Bill was passed in 2019 largely due to the work of the grassroots agencies listed above. Sprout staff participate in lobby days when the legislature is open, and have significant working relationships with local elected officials.

Evaluation of trends led to lessons learned

Sprout is strategically engaged in political committees to strengthen the sustainability of the local foods value chain through policy (statute) and deeply invested in evaluation methodology to measure impact. Strategies were deployed for data management between all food hubs in Minnesota who are engaged in Farm to School programs to begin to utilize WealthWorks for statewide congruency as we continue to move the dial on policy work for local food programs. However, those efforts dissipated with the departure of primary dedicated staff.

Systems change is layered and can be described as systems change that impacts one person, a single organization, a community, and by policy impacting all.

Systems change that allows for infrastructure within systems change continues to evolve as Sprout and its partners coordinate regional programs, specifically with regard to the RxCSA. County Veteran's Services Officers were the primary referral agent for the Veteran's CSA program. Additionally, community mental health executive teams, county attorney offices and its staff are the primary referral agency for the Eat Well Be Well Program. Systems change that impacts one person can be identified when one person is now allowed to cook his own food within a group home structure because of his participation in the RxCSA programming, its education, and the newly acquired intellectual and individual skills.

Systems change that impacts single organizations, communities and policy impacting all is clearly demonstrated in the new initiatives led by numerous community organizations in partnership with the City of Little Falls. Advancing the voice of the community through collaboration between private, public and nonprofits to benefit the local foods value chain is a new level of partnership, team building and partnerships to advance systems change.



7. SOCIAL WEALTH

Stock of trust, relationships, and networks that support civil society.

The trust, networks, and inclusive relationships needed to get things done. Investments in social capital are those that lead to new conversations, shared experiences, and connections between individuals and groups and/or strengthen relationships within groups.

When we build social assets through our local food value chain the regions wealth increases through increased participation and individual/business financial gains. Social assets are the foundational for building and strengthening the relationships ESSENTIAL to sell our commodities, to preserve our land, to honor our cultures.

Within this project we measured and tracked the following to determine the success of our Social Wealth creation:

MEASUREMENTS OF SUCCESS:

- Number of local food value chain members
- Number of success stories (qualitative examples of how activity meets local food value chain goals)
 - Sprout – Number of opportunities for business expansion
- Number of cooperatives that have participated in the Intercultural Diversity Inventory (new measure for 2019)

New Markets

Number of opportunities for business expansion into new markets in underrepresented diverse populations:

Impact

2016 - 2017: The total number of vendors is 113 who were all offered opportunities for expansion at each of the 42 markets (this number includes the Little Falls Mississippi Market, which only ran in a pilot program for 2017).

2018: The total number of vendors over 2018 is 138 vendor instances with 65 unique vendors who were all offered opportunities for expansion at the 6 Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace events.

2019: The total number of vendors over 2019 is 219 vendor instances with 88 unique vendors who were offered opportunities for expansion at the 6 Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace events.

Impact

2016 - 2017 - The total number of growers participating in the Sprout Food Hub, since inception, is over 80 small family farms. Of those, the top five growers receiving financial benefit include Amish, Latino, and farms operated primarily by women

2018: Sprout made financial transactions with 38 individual growers in 2018, and reveal 32% of all cost of goods sold were procured from Amish farms.

2019: Sprout made financial transactions with 53 individual growers in 2019, and reveal 53% of all cost of goods sold were procured from Amish farms.

Business Development

2018: Three food entrepreneurs who utilized the intellectual capital of Sprout staff in licensing and business development have now entered into launching their own small business startups with two potential new kitchens in the region. This is intentionally placed in Social Wealth versus Intellectual Wealth as a measure of success for food entrepreneurs in business expansion. These are all small businesses owned and operated by women.

2019: At the end of the December market, vendors were asked to fill out a new survey specifically designed to carve out additional opportunities received through their relationships with Sprout. Of those surveyed, 53% indicated affirmatively to the question: "Has your business grown or become a greater source of revenue for you?"

Measure tools: QuickBooks financial software and Excel Spreadsheets updated weekly

Reinvestment

Number of Co-ops that support and benefit from the Mobile Market – the Mobile Market business model articulates that ALL annual net profit is distributed evenly to the 7 food cooperatives of the region who in turn use the funds for membership/ownership one-time fees for low-income residents to become co-op members/owners.

Impact

2017: Formed Regional Food Cooperative Workgroup. Five different food cooperatives are involved in sharing lessons, advancing systems, peer audits, sharing knowledge across region, and shared opportunities for access to technical assistance, and capital investments. Seven different food cooperatives are invested in the Sprout WealthWorks Mobile Market.

2018: Seven Five food cooperatives collaborate quarterly, have sought funding to advance systems, and are invested in the Sprout WealthWorks Mobile Market.

2019: Through grant funding received from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Good Food Access Program for Technical Assistance, food cooperatives have sent board members and staff to all trainings offered in 2019. One food cooperative, Crow Wing Food Cooperative, was the winner of a Brainerd Lakes Chamber sponsored "Downtown Destination" award and will be relocating in the spring of 2020. Estimated increased square footage available is 2,800 square feet. While seven different cooperatives were part of the initial Regional Co-op Initiative, three have either closed or have changed leadership models and are not participating.

Measure tools: Microsoft Word Document updated quarterly

Co-ops that support and benefit the WealthWorks Mobile Market

1. Crow Wing Food Co-op in Brainerd (Crow Wing County) 39 years old
2. Down Home Foods in Wadena (Wadena County) 2 years old
3. Ideal Green Market Co-op in Ideal Township/Pequot Lakes (Cass & Crow Wing Counties) 3 years old
4. Minnesota Street Market in St. Joseph (Stearns County, Region 7W) 6 years old
5. The Purple Carrot in Little Falls (Morrison County) forming, target opening in 2019
6. Non-Profit Partner (501c3) Sprout Food Hub (serving 5+ county region in Central MN) 6 years old, Mobile Market target launch 2019

Welcoming Communities

Building on the Regional Branding efforts of "The Good Life" - three Region Five Development Commission staff and one staff from Sprout, became Qualified Assessors for the Intercultural Diversity Inventory (IDI). IDI provides in-depth insights on how individuals and groups make sense of cultural differences and how they respond to cultural differences. <https://idiinventory.com/>

Impact

2019 – three regional cooperatives and nonprofit partner, Sprout, have taken the IDI assessment

Impact - Region Wide

Since July 2018, 27 groups, made up of 288 people, completed IDI assessments
80 individuals held one-on-one sessions for personal profile review

Trends

The success of the community development strategies embarked upon by Sprout and Region Five Development Commission continue to include economic development and market opportunities for all.

Workforce development does not stop at business attraction as businesses will locate where there is a qualified workforce. Qualified workers want to live, work, play and raise their children in communities that are welcoming to all.

Using the IDI assessment tool, Region Five Development Commission has engaged local units of government, school districts and nonprofits in a regional discussion to identify and deploy strategies that attract and retain families. For food cooperatives, this is critically important to increase revenue streams, diversify inventory to meet cultural needs and desires, and to increase access. For all private, nonprofit, local units of government, leaders, thinkers, and particularly policy makers, it is a strategic investment into the collective and individual roles in representing and promoting communities.

As growers and makers have seen increased economic benefit, these entrepreneurs have increased their participation in becoming and being voices for advancing systems change that scales Sprout and its operations.

Evaluation of trends led to lessons learned

During the summer of 2019, Growth & Justice unveiled a portion of the Minnesota Equity Blueprint to a large audience at the Sprout facility. Organizers, including Region Five Development Commission and Sprout, had been forewarned of potential protests on site during the event. This is an organization of citizens who are largely opposed to immigration, renewable energy, and equity strategies. Picketing outside, these citizens were invited in and did participate in the community discussion. While belief systems and world views can be vast in spectrum, all voices have an equal place at the table. It is the first step to widening perspective, creating channels for deeper appreciation and understanding, and gaining the experience necessary to advance the journey along the continuum.

“...we work constructively side by side with our most conscientious neighbors advancing community-based policies and practices that change hearts and minds to again embrace equity as a social and economic game-changer...”

– Jane Leonard, President, Growth & Justice



Snapshot of Who's at Your Table?:

This event was held in August of 2018. It is a courageous attempt to bring together members of our communities who have significant stories to share as we continue to develop tools to become welcoming communities. Inspired by the TEDx Gull Lake talk by Arlene Jones titled “Who’s At Your Table?” - Sprout, Region Five Development Commission, and regional nonprofit partner Happy Dancing Turtle gathered members from the Latino, Amish, Tribal, East African and Somali community members to share their culture and heritage, using storytelling to uplift the importance of gathering, sharing meals, communities, belonging, and the collective good of community development.

Breaking Bread: <https://www.brainerddispatch.com/entertainment/4625377-breaking-bread-family-style-meal-brings-together-cultures>

R5DC Welcoming Communities:
<https://youtu.be/vGycHEQuSHI>



“Who's at your table?” event (zig zag from left to right): Martin Jennings, Abdi Daisane, Mahado Ali, Enos Schwartzentruber, Jerry Schwartzentruber, Mary Schwartzentruber, Elizabeth Quillo, Lu Brunkhorst, Fortuna Alexander, Arlene Jones. August 2018

8. CULTURAL WEALTH

Contains all other forms of wealth.

The traditions, customs and beliefs shared by the community, including the way you see the world. Investments in cultural capital can help to preserve tradition while also helping to shift and align beliefs in ways that help people develop shared values and history.

Cultural wealth is the container that holds all the other forms of wealth, regardless of the evolutionary stage of a local food value chain, or any value chain. Think of cultural wealth as drops of liquid from all the other forms of wealth collected in a cultural container. The amount of liquid you have is not judged, it is a measure of where you are. HOW we invest in all the other forms of wealth – through the local food value chain – is a tool to shift the regional culture in ways that meet our goals. The Sprout Local Food Value Chain will establish annual goals in each of the forms of wealth to gauge if the local food value chain is adding to our cultural wealth aspirations.

Within this project we measured and tracked the following to determine the success of our Cultural Wealth creation:

MEASUREMENTS OF SUCCESS:

- Number of stories told related to culture and evolving regional identity
- Creative Placemaking: number of businesses participating in place-based identity
- Number of successions/new entrants in locally owned business sectors that reflect regional identity
- Number of events and activities related to regional identity and culture
 - Sprout Marketplace – Number attendees - & Number stories
 - Number of Volunteer Opportunities and Volunteer Hours
- \$\$ directed towards artists in creative placemaking

Our mission is to support an economic development opportunity that utilizes culinary, functional & non-functional art and experiences intended to make Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace a destination, as well as representing the unique cultural diversity of central Minnesota.

New forms of storytelling and evaluation will be used to share:

- Economic impacts - how this effort has impacted personal/business economic conditions
- Cultural awareness – how this effort has changed your cultural awareness and sense of regional assets/value
- Community building – how this effort has impacted community cultural awareness, sense of community identity

Commissioned ART. Project Core Team members from Sprout, R5DC, the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, 3 Cheers Hospitality, Latino Economic Development Corporation, as well as local growers and artists with trusted relationships within Amish and East African communities, continue to meet with culturally diverse communities to prioritize commissioned art that will reside at the Sprout Marketplace to allow for ongoing conversation and appreciation of diverse cultural heritage.

Art demonstrations. In addition to commissioned art from culturally diverse artist, grant funds will support performing artists and artist demonstrations coordinated for public on open Marketplace dates.

Multi-cultural culinary art demonstration and cooking classes. Core team members engage regional culinary artists/chefs to set cooking demonstrations and cooking classes of heritage recipes, alongside community members.

Business classes. Growers and artists will set forth a schedule of learning opportunities, such as succession planning that increase economic prosperity.

Impact

2017: Sprout hired one interpreter with a fee of \$100.00.

2018-2019: Sprout hired a total of five interpreters **to increase access to programming**. Payments to interpreters was \$1,645.00. The majority of hours were spent interpreting for the Sew & Grow - African Women’s Alliance commissioned art project. The interpreter made one-on-one calls to invite each program participant and helped coordinate transportation to and from workshop sessions. As a result, 13 Sew & Grow participants engaged in the project 30 times in August, September, and October of 2018. See the [Sew & Grow Report](#) for more details on this project. Also see Snapshot of Sew & Grow.

Workshops

Culturally diverse interactions and diverse community member engagement were measured by the number of attendees to Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace events. Events and Workshops held at the Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace explored a variety of different topics and included different cultural exhibits.

Impact

2016-2017: Classes and Workshops had on average 24 attendees. Accounting for every type of workshop, class, event, etc. the Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace has seen a total of 6,055 attendees through its doors.

2018: Classes and Workshops had an average of 24 attendees. Accounting for every type of workshop, class, event, etc., the Sprout Marketplace has, in 2018, seen 3,350 attendees through its doors.

Measure tools: Microsoft Excel Workbook updated weekly

Event Attendance

Category	Number of Attendees thru 2017	Number of Attendees 2018	Number of Attendees 2019
Workshops, Classes, Events	714	933	1561
Rental Instances	100	86	151
Vendor Attendance	357	213	219
Live Better Live Longer Events	1232	150	0
Little Falls Mississippi Market	529	0	0
Sprout Marketplace Attendees	3123	2168	2254
Total	6055	3550	4185
Volunteer Instances		50	26
Volunteer Hours		208.87	92.6

Volunteer Hours decreased in 2019 due to Parties with a Purpose being eliminated from Sprout Model to raise funds for nonprofits.



Debra Leigh dancing with market attendee at the March 2019 market.



Snapshot of MINCED: The Finer Version of Chopped:

MINCED: The Finer Version of Chopped is a live culinary art competition which launched as an annual event in 2018. The unscripted challenge grills three local chefs as they face off in the Sprout kitchen stadium. In 2018, the chefs' home kitchens were in Brainerd, Crosby and St. Cloud and in 2019, chefs' home kitchens were Brainerd, New London and Pillager, spanning over 100 miles of representation in our region. The cooking competition is an event in which Sprout seeks to excite central Minnesotans around locally produced food, culinary art and food culture. One way this is done is to provide mystery ingredients for each of the three rounds. Ingredients in 2018 represented Latin American cuisine and included Chayote squash, dried peppers, pork cracklings, and purple hominy. Ingredients in 2019 represented East African cuisine and included Somali coffee spice mix, goat meat, chickpeas, black tea and bananas. Competition is judged by local celebrities, including Meadow Roberts, the 10-year-old baking pro who competed on The Food Network's Kids Baking Championship. Audience participants are encouraged to vote for the "People's Choice" and is another method of engagement. In 2019, Sprout engaged local businesses, who supported the event through financial sponsorships. MINCED in 2019 also included students from Pillager High School and Sauk-Rapids-Rice ProStart Programs participated as sous chefs for each competing chef. The "MINCED: Finer Version of Chopped" continues to be one of Sprout's most popular events. Emceed by 2018 Master Chef, Scotty Stocco and Brainerd Dispatch's Community Editor, Chelsey Perkins, MINCED raised \$3,385.71 and had 215 attendees. Beth Dooley, 2018 celebrity judge and author of numerous award-winning cookbooks, including James Beard-winning "The Sioux Chef's Indigenous Kitchen," written with Sean Sherman. Beth Dooley remarked that events like MINCED are proof that the Midwest is definitively not "flyover country."

Press on MINCED 2019

[Live cooking competition heats up, local chefs rival each other at Sprout](https://www.brainerddispatch.com/news/4588888-live-cooking-competition-heats-local-chefs-rival-each-other-sprout)

<https://www.brainerddispatch.com/news/4588888-live-cooking-competition-heats-local-chefs-rival-each-other-sprout>

[New London chef earns Master Chef title at MINCED: People's Choice goes to Prairie Bay head chef](https://www.brainerddispatch.com/news/4611856-new-london-chef-earns-master-chef-title-minced-peoples-choice-goes-prairie-bay-head)

<https://www.brainerddispatch.com/news/4611856-new-london-chef-earns-master-chef-title-minced-peoples-choice-goes-prairie-bay-head>

[Mackbee named "Master Chef" at MINCED](https://www.hometownsource.com/morrison_county_record/mat-o-mackbee-named-master-chef-at-minced/article_d4dc2220-7b05-11e9-bdac-ab674a4784a7.html)

https://www.hometownsource.com/morrison_county_record/mat-o-mackbee-named-master-chef-at-minced/article_d4dc2220-7b05-11e9-bdac-ab674a4784a7.html

Press on MINCED 2018

['Minced' cooking competition to feature local chefs](https://www.sproutmn.com/media/minced-cooking-competition-to-feature-local-chefs)

<https://www.sproutmn.com/media/minced-cooking-competition-to-feature-local-chefs>

[Iron Range Eatery chef claims 'Minced' crown: Cooking competition raises funds for mobile food market](https://www.sproutmn.com/media/iron-range-eatery-chef-claims-minced-crown-cooking-competition-raises-funds-for-mobile-food-market)

<https://www.sproutmn.com/media/iron-range-eatery-chef-claims-minced-crown-cooking-competition-raises-funds-for-mobile-food-market>

[Puttin' on The Mitts: Mystery ingredients? Challenge accepted](https://www.sproutmn.com/media/puttin-on-the-mitts-mystery-ingredients-challenge-accepted)

<https://www.sproutmn.com/media/puttin-on-the-mitts-mystery-ingredients-challenge-accepted>

Chefs Mateo Mackbee, Jenna Brower Von Siebolds & Tom Kavanaugh | MINCED 2019



Placemaking Investments

Culturally diverse interactions and diverse community member engagement was measured by the dollars invested in placemaking activities. Commissioned art from diverse cultures including the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, Latino, Somali and East African, Amish, youth and grower art was commissioned to beautify the space at the Sprout Marketplace. Commissioned artists included culinary artists (chefs and community cooks), musicians, storytellers, welders, graphic designers, videographers, woodworkers, photographers, potters, painters, dancers, along with language tutorials, cultural exhibits, and several functional art pieces.

In late 2016, \$440,000.00 was secured by ArtPlace America with over half being invested back into culturally specific commissioned local art with implementation to begin in 2017.

Impact

Through 2019, 242 instances have been commissioned to create unique pieces of art, share their musical talent or create foods specific to regional cultures. It is worthy to note that many instances included many groups of artists including Sew & Grow, Pillager High School Chamber Choir, Stearns County Pachanga Society, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Head Start Program, Pillager and Sauk Rapids-Rice High School ProStart students, Little Falls Jazz Ensemble, etc.

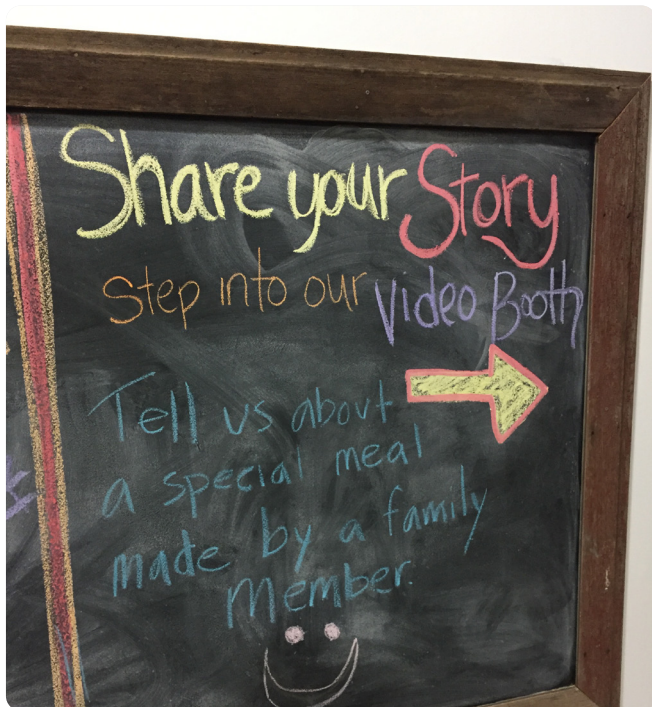
Measure tools: Microsoft GreatPlains finance software updated daily and Microsoft Excel Workbook updated monthly

Impact

Total payments to artists includes commissioned art, performance art, culinary art, and interpreters.

- 2016: Total payments to artists: \$ 1,200.00
- 2017: Total payments to artists: \$72,099.51
- 2018: Total payments to artists: \$87,378.40
- 2019: Total payments to artists: \$97,131.77

Measure tools: Microsoft Great Plains finance software updated daily and Microsoft Excel Workbook updated monthly.



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ARTPLACE

Storytelling

Through this project, testimonials and stories were collected from Sprout Marketplace growers, makers, artists, and customers that spoke to their experience and how the Sprout Marketplace was building multicultural experiences. These stories were collected in a variety of methods and medias including blog posts, press stories on ArtPlace and Sprout website, Facebook Live videos, video posts, video barn entries, Reci-Piece Project entry, Facebook Photo Albums and Sprout Annual Report.

Impact

2017 – 2019: 250 stories collected and published to formulate our Sprout Marketplace story.

Measure tool: Microsoft Excel Workbook updated weekly



Snapshot of Video Barn:

In the Video Barn, MN State Representative Erin Maye Quade shared in the Video Barn a story about her wife’s sriracha ramen, which all started when they received a bunch of local tomatoes from their first CSA box.





Snapshot: Sew & Grow:

The Sew & Grow program has been in existence since 2010, when it was first a program of the Multicultural Center of Central Minnesota. Today, the program is operated by the African Women’s Alliance, bringing women together to learn, teach, and create sewing projects. The women of the Sew & Grow group reside throughout the Greater St. Cloud area and have origins in Liberia, Uganda, Sudan, Kenya, among other East and West African countries. The sewing skill level of each of the women varies from beginner to advanced, and many women volunteer to teach new skills at each class. Some projects include a simple dress or hijab, crib sheet, table centerpiece, curtains, pincushion, and general garment mending.

The collaboration with Sprout MN presented an opportunity for an artist-led, multi-medium project using fabric to create a journey from skill building to art installation. Using a combination of Skillshare, Design/Idea Generation, and Creation, the project offered workshops in fabric dyeing, weaving, and binding to create the materials used in the ultimate art installation which hangs from the ceiling of the Sprout facility in Little Falls, Minnesota. As a former boat manufacturing facility and industrial warehouse, the need for color and movement in space was achieved by using different fabrics, fabrics of different colors and cuts, and structural elements through with weaving and woodwork. The use of wire and ribbon in the weavings further enhanced the impression of movement of the piece.

The Skillshare sessions took place during regular and occurring meeting times of the Sew & Grow group. In two sessions, Lucy Senstad explained the fabric dyeing process through demonstration, and then together, the group prepared and dyed over 300 yards of fabric, ribbon and cord – the length of three soccer fields. Each participant also dyed their own 36” by 36” Silk Charmeuse fabric (close to the size of a Hijab), to take home.



Trends

Sprout's Growers & Makers Marketplace offers a unique community engagement setting that creatively engages residents to design projects and social programming at a regional space where art/culture/food increase cultural appreciation and offer positive economic impacts.

Placemaking

In December 2016, ArtPlace America awarded \$440,000.00 to R5DC to support an economic development opportunity at the [Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace](#).

Placemaking at Sprout Marketplace will have a regional impact on economic opportunities for growers and artists and cultural/social cohesion between our communities. This will be done through food, art, education, demonstration and storytelling, with Sprout Marketplace as the hub of this placemaking transformation.

Evaluation of trends led to lessons learned

The region has also seen a burgeoning interest in the principles of Creative Placemaking with additional local granting agencies utilizing Asset Based Community Development and providing educational opportunities for nonprofits, arts organizations and individual artists. These initiatives have also uplifted the powerful impact of storytelling in community economic development as evidenced by the increasing number of applications being submitted and funded through Regional Arts Councils.

Much of our work in developing relationships within social and cultural capitals had been at a pace where we anticipated we would have the same outcomes when working with the various cultural groups in our region. What we didn't consider was that we were further along in developing those relationships at the beginning with some cultural groups than we were with others. Building those trusted relationships takes time and the expectations we had of our teams in how quickly these relationships could be forged may have been a bit inequitable to ourselves.

“Ultimately, a central question relating to cultural capital is: Do the strategies that are chosen - and the measures to track progress – maintain, enhance, or at a minimum, avoid harm to the ways that local traditions, history and values are understood, shared, and evolve over time?”

Leila Tamari – Artplace America

The Who's At Your Table project and the deepening work of Region Five Development Commission in the Intercultural Development Inventory/Welcoming Communities are projects that are direct outcomes of the work of Sprout, the impact of Artplace America Funding and utilization of WealthWorks in our evaluation process.

“This work is a reflection of the ways agencies/ organizations are thinking differently due to the evolution of Sprout and the local foods/ culture/arts focus. As we look to the future we are directing more of our attention and intention into “who” benefits from the projects and programs delivered by our local foods value chain. We continue to ask if the efforts are designed by/for/of the people living on the margins of our economy and if we are experiencing systems changes that provide equity” .”

Cheryal Lee Hills
Executive Director
Region Five Development Commission



