



# Creating Healthy Communities

We create health for people, communities and the planet through love, healing food and empowering the next generation.

Founded 2007

Budget \$2.4 million

31 staff, 1,000+ volunteers



# Core Programs

- Organic Medically Tailored Meal Delivery & Nutrition Education for People with Illness
- Youth Leadership Development, Culinary & Gardening Skill, Work Readiness & Food System Education
- Community Nutrition Education
- National Affiliate Program



# 2017 IMPACT

## 3 Program Sites in Sonoma & Marin Counties, CA

- ♥ 25,500 hours of gardening, cooking and food system education for 530 youth
- ♥ 104,000 meals to 700 clients and their families
- ♥ 600 adult volunteers give 22,000 hours
- ♥ 440 reached through community nutrition classes



# Ceres Earned Income Activities

## Meal Program

- ♥ Sliding Scale
- ♥ Meals for Health

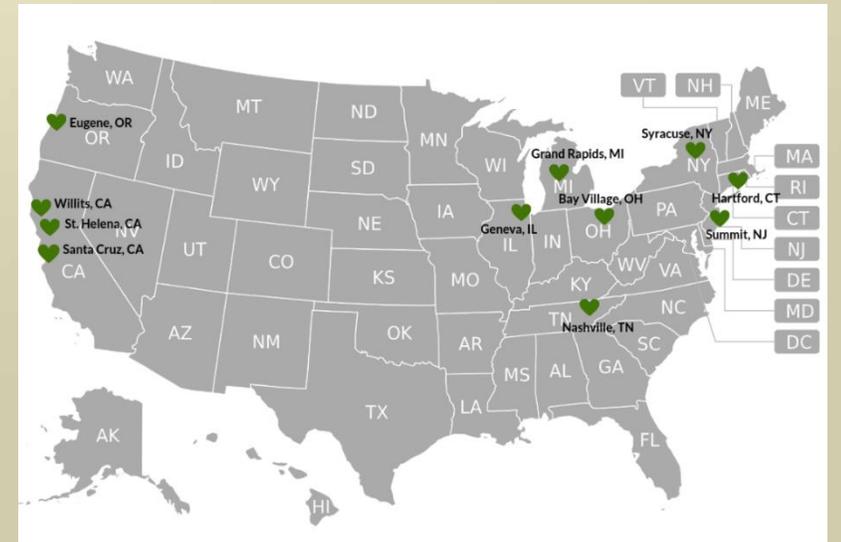
## Other Food Programs

- ♥ Café
- ♥ Catering
- ♥ Sales of Supplemental Products

## Community Nutrition Education

- ♥ Nourishing Connections Cookbook
- ♥ Nutrition for Wellness Health Center Classes
- ♥ Sonoma Public Library Classes
- ♥ Ceres' own Classes

## Affiliate Training



# Café

## Background: Why Open a Café?

- ♥ New program site located in medical business park
- ♥ Location was previously a hospital cafeteria
- ♥ No other food or coffee business within 1 mile
- ♥ Partner organization looking for job training opportunities



# Business & Mission Goals

- ♥ Earn income to support new program site
- ♥ Provide paid job training to youth
- ♥ Promote healthy organic local whole food
- ♥ Expand Ceres' circle of support



# Launch Phase

- ♥ Created basic business plan with projections for sales, costs, etc.
- ♥ Hired new staff member to lead effort
  - had worked in a café but not managed one
- ♥ Surveyed staff in immediate building re food, price points, frequency of purchasing
- ♥ Designed start-up menu
- ♥ Recruited and trained volunteers to support
- ♥ Promotion plan: staff in building, adjacent medical offices

# Challenges & Lessons Learned

- ♥ Lead staff did not have the management or administrative skills needed for success – required support from other mostly senior staff
- ♥ Volunteer labor not as skilled or reliable as needed
- ♥ Which led to more paid staff than expected
- ♥ Difficulty engaging youth in paid internships; more staff time to support and manage well
- ♥ Ceres commitment to organic and local food needed higher price point to support profitability; not what the market could bear
- ♥ Hours required to support Café cut into core program kitchen time

# Decision to Close

- ♥ Second full year budget projected significant continued loss
- ♥ Cafe was impacting ability to run and expand core program
- ♥ Expert advisors concluded location / hours / price point / audience unlikely to become profitable



# Closing a Social Enterprise: Lessons Learned

- ♥ Framing the success
- ♥ Bringing people into the “why” as it relates to your mission
- ♥ Expect the upset
  - ♥ Strong following from patrons and volunteers
  - ♥ Donors offering funding
  - ♥ Media wanting to cover “close”
  - ♥ Petition!

Bottom Line: A social enterprise needs to contribute to your ability to achieve your organization’s core mission.

# Catering

## Background

- ♥ Began in 2012 when we moved into our first owned kitchen location
- ♥ From 2012 – 2016 supported by a long-time volunteer with almost exclusively volunteer labor
- ♥ Jobs were infrequent
- ♥ Youth only minimally involved
- ♥ Profitability high (almost no overhead)



# Catering Expansion

- ♥ 2016 with new location and more kitchen time:
  - ♥ Hired Catering Manager on staff
  - ♥ Revisioned potential and goals
  - ♥ Created “pathway” for paid youth job training and formally integrated into Youth Program
- ♥ Developed brochure and promotion strategy

**CATERING BY CERES COMMUNITY PROJECT**



**Why Ceres?**  
Since 2012 Ceres Community Project has brought our healthy, local and organic food philosophy to events from parties and business meetings to fund-raising events for fellow nonprofits like United Way of the Wine Country, Sonoma County Conservation Action, Social Advocates for Youth, Seeds of Change, Sebastopol Center for the Arts, and the Laguna Foundation.  
With a centrally located kitchen in Santa Rosa and an experienced team led by professional chefs, we're ready to cater your next event.

**Services**

- ♥ Business and lunch meetings
- ♥ Non-profit fund-raising events
- ♥ Private parties and events
- ♥ Everything from drop off to fully staffed sit-down meals
- ♥ Food only, or full service including rentals
- ♥ Vegan, gluten free and other dietary needs happily accommodated

**More than delicious food**

- ♥ We use only foods raised and sourced sustainably, with most ingredients certified organic and locally produced
- ♥ We provide job training experience to hundreds of young people each year
- ♥ You'll be supporting Ceres' programs empowering youth and supporting low-income community members with healthy organic and delivered meals during illness

**Contact Us**  
To inquire about Ceres Catering, please contact  
[catering@ceresproject.org](mailto:catering@ceresproject.org)  
707-829-5833 x304



# Catering Goals

- ♥ Earn income to support our work
- ♥ Create visibility for Ceres and for our work and build new relationships
- ♥ Promote the health benefits of organic local whole foods
- ♥ Provide paid job training opportunities to youth



# Catering: Where We Are Today

- ♥ Full-time Paid Catering Manager with 8 hours a week of Admin Support
- ♥ Grant funding to support paid youth job training using “pathway” in Youth Program
- ♥ Consistent promotion strategy using social media and email blasts
- ♥ 3-6 events a month
- ♥ Not yet profitable with costs fully loaded, but contributes to overhead

# Catering: Types of Events We Do

- ♥ Fundraising events for other nonprofit organizations
- ♥ Office lunches and other events for corporate partners
- ♥ Community events (Sonoma Wine & Food Festival, Hot Air Balloon Classic, North Coast Regional Water Commission)
- ♥ Memorial services for past clients or family members of supporters



# Food Businesses Learnings

- ♥ Lots of opportunities for “mission aligned” social enterprises
  - ♥ Understand the full cost of your social enterprise:
    - ♥ Time need from other parts of your organization
      - Communication Department, Accounting, etc.
    - ♥ Staff support and management time required for success
    - ♥ Impacts on your core work
  - ♥ Keep your eye on your primary work – what are you really here to do?
  - ♥ Hire the right people – don’t sacrifice on key staff expertise
  - ♥ Evaluate frequently and intentionally
  - ♥ Be willing to abandon if you learn the costs are not worth the benefits
  - ♥ Monetizing what you are already doing is the most profitable way to earn income

# QUESTIONS?

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