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Department of  
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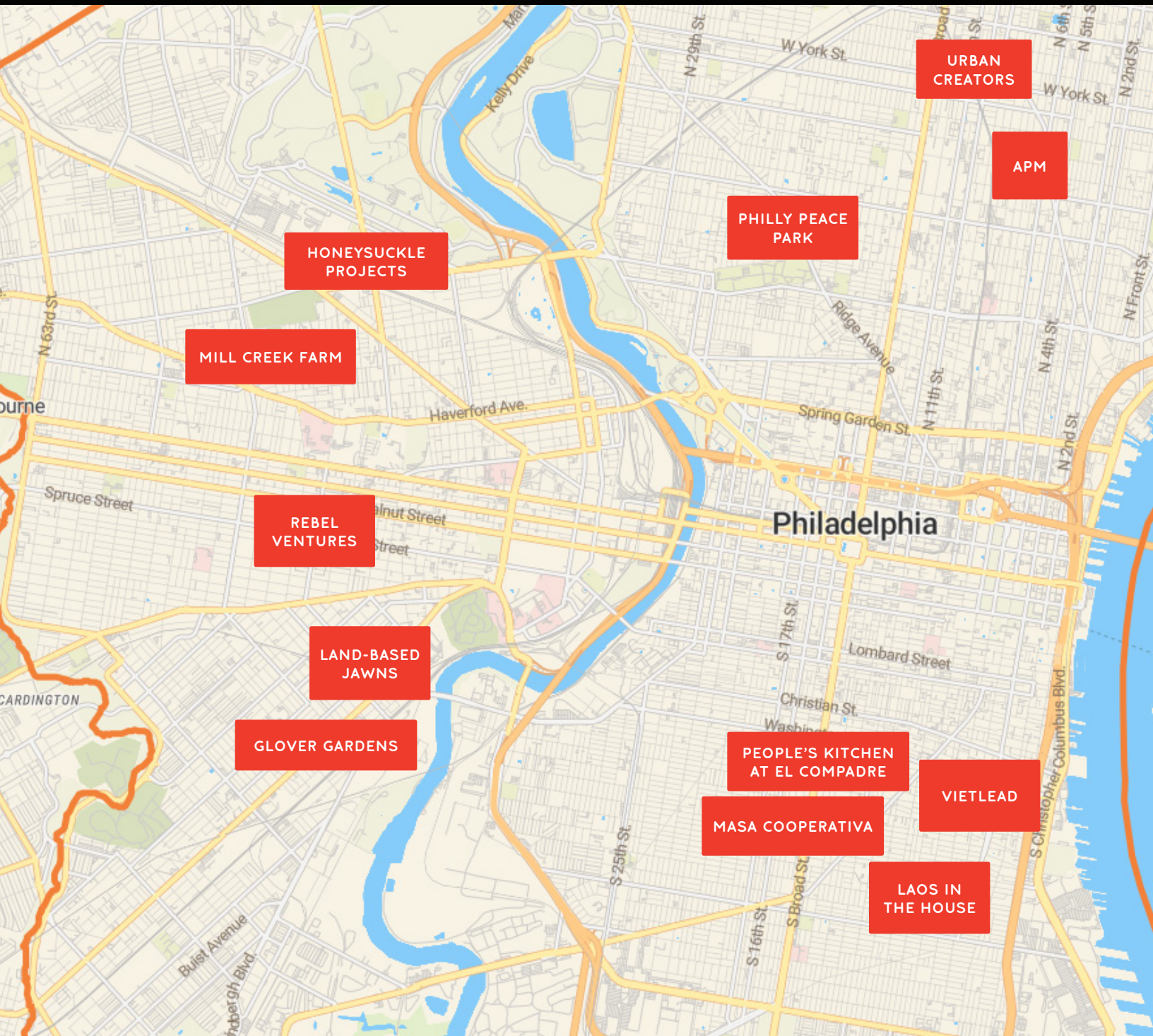
# Philadelphia Food Justice Initiative *Impact Report*

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# MAP OF AWARDED PROJECTS (2019, 2020)



PFJI has awarded over \$620,000 in grants in the last two years to advance community-driven food justice solutions



PHOTO CREDIT: ALI MENDELSON, MD

In 2019, 6 projects received a total of \$180,000 in funding for a range of efforts to grow food justice in their communities.

In 2020, 9 projects received a total of \$443,592 in funding, including 3 from the 2019 round which were given grants to continue and expand their work.

**10** Black, Immigrant and People of Color owned or led

**6** owned or led by Women

## PROJECT TYPES FUNDED

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**7** Urban Agriculture

**6** Retail Food Stores

**5** Community Meals, Trainings, and/or Workshops

**4** Predevelopment, Feasibility Planning, or Strategic Planning

**3** Supporting Creation of a Small Business



# **The Philadelphia Food Justice Initiative supports community-led projects that grow food justice.**

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The Philadelphia Food Justice Initiative (PFJI) empowers communities to exercise their right to grow, sell and eat healthy food. PFJI is a partnership of the Philadelphia Department of Public Health's Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention (CDIP) and Reinvestment Fund.

Historically, the food system has displaced, enslaved, and undervalued the labor, land rights, and self-determination of Black and Brown individuals, women, immigrants, and indigenous people. In Philadelphia today, low income communities and communities of color still have fewer fresh food choices.

PFJI supports community-driven solutions in areas where access to healthier food is needed the most. PFJI is informed by health justice, the collective movement to heal society and remove barriers that prevent individual and community well-being.

Philadelphia has tremendous food assets and opportunities for individual and collective action. PFJI strengthens these assets by providing funding for innovative, community-led projects that work to further food justice. PFJI prioritizes projects led by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, immigrants and people living with disabilities, and those with lived experience with health injustice. PFJI supports projects that offer fair compensation to staff and partners.

# Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha (APM)

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2019 & 2020

APM, a community development corporation in North Philadelphia, in collaboration with a resident-led advisory council, is developing and re-launching a community-owned Food Buying Club for affordable produce. The Food Buying Club (FBC) works towards dismantling and changing a broken food system and the inequities that the current system sustains by boosting community control over the process of bringing food to neighborhoods. Through FBC, community members have the opportunity to be directly involved in bringing fresh produce into their community, purchase produce at affordable, wholesale prices, and collaborate with APM to grow neighborhood capacity to operate the program sustainably. In the first year of funding, the Philadelphia Food Justice Initiative supported a feasibility plan and community resident council process to guide the development of a scalable and sustainable model. The ability to access fresh produce, at an affordable price, will be integral to the health and post-pandemic recovery of the community—financially, physically, and socially.

## Glover Gardens

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2019 & 2020

Glover Gardens is an emerging business straight out of Southwest Philadelphia. The founder of Glover Gardens is Hajjah Glover, an alumna of Bartram's Garden Sankofa Farm internship. With the mission of helping communities become sovereign and grow connections with their ancestors, body, and soul, Glover Gardens designs, builds and installs garden beds. In the first year of operations, Glover Gardens provided many local families with a consultation and installed ten garden beds at homes in Southwest, West, North, and Northeast Philadelphia. In the second year of operations, with additional support, Glover Gardens will reach more families with consultations and home garden bed installations, and establish partnerships with local schools to create infrastructure for outdoor gardening and learning.

"My project helps to create sovereign communities by putting people in control and in charge of growing their food, weeding it, and generally maintaining it."

— Hajjah Glover  
*Glover Gardens*

## Honeysuckle Projects

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2020

The Honeysuckle Community Center concept uses food as an anchor for community and will include a small sustainable grocery, meat market, cafe library, and supper club in West Philadelphia. Honeysuckle will place an emphasis on supporting and supplying Black owned artisans and makers. Honeysuckle will reinvent the function of a food space to serve more than just good food, it will nourish a community. Honeysuckle will work to build an ecosystem of Black and minority farmers, artisans, artists, and makers in Philadelphia and beyond that will be engaged in the community center's network. The Philadelphia Food Justice Initiative will support Honeysuckle identifying and developing a project location in West Philadelphia.

# Land-Based Jaws

2020

Land-based Jaws is a spiritually-rooted organization that provides education and training to Black and brown women on agriculture, survival, carpentry, and self/community healing. The Earthseed Workshop Series and dinner event will introduce participants to traditional and natural agricultural methods; survival skills such as shelter making, fire starting, identifying wild edible plants; carpentry skills such as building raised garden beds, tables, and shelves; self-defense skills; self and community healing techniques. The Food Justice Project will also include a Dinner, which will feature seasonal dishes created using crops of the African diaspora and Americas that are grown at Sankofa Community Farm.

"... I've been able to expand my knowledge of food and its health benefits, learning how to make our favorite dishes more healthy while keeping it delicious. It also opened my eyes to food inequality and insecurity in our communities which I wasn't completely aware of. As I worked, I saw myself want to become a role model for the youth and show why what we're doing is important and impactful..."

— Instructor, *Rebel Ventures*



# Laos in the House

2019

Laos in the House is an arts organization with the mission of promoting storytelling in the Lao American refugee communities through the mediums of art. The Philadelphia Food Justice Initiative supported a two-part project that included growing vegetables and herbs native to Lao and Southeast Asian Cuisine and then use them in intergenerational cooking classes taught by elders and local chefs, as well as virtual lessons and connections with chefs and communities around the country. The community events and classes supported continuing knowledge and skills of food preservation and preparation and shared often untold stories of adaptability and survival by Southeast Asian immigrants who have been affected by war.

# MASA Cooperativa

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2019

Masa Cooperativa is a new cooperative of existing businesses and individual members, to produce wholesale and sell corn masa. The project is based in the indigenous tradition of cultivating and processing corn for food consumption, a thousands of years old process developed by the ancestors of Mesoamerica. Masa Cooperativa empowers people who are descendants of and members of this culture and tradition. The worker-owner cooperative model will empower workers to earn a fair wage, and centers worker voices and decision making, within indigenous knowledge foodways. In the first year, Masa Cooperativa established and formed an LLC, created and translated bylaws, produced a marketing video and logo with local immigrant artists and businesses, and purchased and stored initial inventory.

# Mill Creek Farm

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2019

Mill Creek Farm is a Black-run urban farm in West Philadelphia providing training and food access grounded in environmental, trauma-informed healing, regenerative practices and indigenous heritage. Mill Creek Farm fosters a collaborative learning environment, that believes that everyone has knowledge to share that can help facilitate learning in a group. Mill Creek Farm has transitioned to being a Black and Brown-led cooperatively governed Food Justice organization, and prioritizes community participation and direction at the farm. With Philadelphia Food Justice Initiative support, Mill Creek Farm hired three Black women for new farmer, farmer assistant, and operations associate positions to manage the farm. In addition to programming and farm market sites, Mill Creek Farm had donated hundreds of pounds of produce to pop up food drives around West Philadelphia that had emerged in response to exacerbated need due to COVID-19.

# The People's Kitchen at El Compadre

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2020

The People's Kitchen is a food security and employment survival collaborative empowering a multi-racial movement that connects food access to community organizing and social justice in Philadelphia. The Project is a platform for working together for the common good. During natural and human-created disasters, food becomes a vehicle to engage with communities, share resources, and build relationships. The Philadelphia Food Justice Initiative is supporting the People's Kitchens food-centered, participatory framework that provides free meals to vulnerable households during and after the COVID-19 emergency response, as well as connecting social and health services, civic engagement opportunities; employment, training, and leadership development centering restaurant workers and immigrant community members; and supporting local food systems through urban agriculture, recovered food, and intentional sourcing.

## Philly Peace Park

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2020

The North Philly Peace Park is an open, fence-free, charitable, intergenerational, neighborhood-managed ecology campus championing food, education and community. The Peacetown Project is an integrated, sustained effort of intentional community equity building led by the Philly Peace Park centered around local resident-led land-based urban farming, beautification, communal design, diverse food justice programming, and stimulating local entrepreneurship and sustainable employment opportunities for neighborhood residents. The Philadelphia Food Justice Initiative will support the educational programming at the North Philly Peace Park Pavilion and expansion to the West Philly Peace Park site.

## Rebel Ventures

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2020

Rebel Ventures is a youth-led social enterprise with the mission to create healthy deliciousness. Rebel Ventures is developing and implementing the Rebel Market, to provide students with healthy and nutritious snacks and beverages during after school hours, as an alternative to the unhealthy options near schools. Not only are the markets operated by students and for students, but the products offered are also produced and packaged by paid high school students in a commercial kitchen. In the first year of the grant, Rebel Ventures hired a market planning team (including high school youth positions) to develop a youth-run healthy corner store, pivoting to an in-school market model to further test products and market needs. Rebel Ventures drafted branding and marketing materials for Rebel Market, hosted two pilot markets, and adapting to the COVID-10 pandemic, shifted to Healthy Deliciousness at Home virtual programming (videos, fund for cooking equipment, virtual cooking workshop run by youth).

## Urban Creators

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2020

The Urban Creators is a platform for radical and collaborative imagination. Since 2010, Urban Creators have used food, art, and education as tools to nurture resilience and self-determination in North Philadelphia. Urban Creators operates Life Do Grow (LDG), an Urban Farm and Neighborhood Creative Commons in North Philly, on the ancestral lands of the indigenous Lenni Lenape. With support from the Philadelphia Food Justice Initiative, Urban Creators will invest in garden infrastructure at Life Do Grow farm; will organize a Neighborhood Marketplace to increase access to fresh food while fostering economic and artistic opportunity; and will host hands-on education programs focused urban agriculture, food justice, health & wellness, the arts, and social entrepreneurship. Urban Creators will also continue to operate a Mobile Market to offer making fresh produce, hot meals, PPE, books, diapers, feminine hygiene products, and other key resources with flexible locations throughout the community.



# VietLead

2020

VietLead is a community organization in South Jersey and Philadelphia. VietLead was founded by members in the Vietnamese community who wish to create a vision for community empowerment and social justice. Their mission is to develop innovative solutions to improve community health, increase sovereignty, and develop Vietnamese leadership in solidarity with other communities of color. VietLead's project, Resilient Roots, will be to maintain Furness Community School Garden and the Youth Leadership Program to provide access to fresh natural produce. In addition, VietLead will be working to organize ethnic businesses along Washington Ave to increase their healthy practices and preserve their space.



**“Through the building out of Furness Community School garden, we hope to create a model for the city for healthy schools that incorporate urban agriculture. We hope to build out an outdoor classroom that classes can utilize especially as schools will start to meet in person at the end of the pandemic.” — VietLead**

## ABOUT THE PARTNERS



The mission of the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) is to protect and promote the health of all Philadelphians and to provide a safety net for the most vulnerable. Within PDPH, the Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention (CDIP), works to change policies, systems, and environments to make healthy living an easy choice for residents. The goals of our programs are to increase physical activity and healthy eating; reduce tobacco use; lower the prevalence of risk factors for cardiovascular disease, including hypertension and high cholesterol; and to prevent avoidable injuries, with a focus on reducing gun violence. The Division is especially concerned about documenting, understanding, and working to reduce disparities in health. We value health justice. Our work is guided by a commitment to all people's health and humanity. We believe:

- All people have the right to live to their fullest potential.
- All communities have the right to create environments that allow them to grow and thrive.
- Public health policy will be developed in full partnership with the community.
- Knowledge comes in many forms and many places in our society.
- Progress only happens when we treat people, communities, partners, and staff with care and respect.



Reinvestment Fund is a mission-driven financial institution committed to making communities work for all people. We bring financial and analytical tools to partnerships that work to ensure that people in communities across the country have the opportunities they strive for: affordable places to live, access to nutritious food and health care, schools where their children can flourish, and strong, local businesses that support jobs. We use data to understand markets and how transactions can have the most powerful impact, which has consistently earned us the top Aeris rating of AAA for financial strength and four stars for impact management. Our asset and risk management systems have also earned us an A+ rating from S&P. Since our inception in 1985, Reinvestment Fund has provided over \$2.4 billion in financing to strengthen neighborhoods, scale social enterprises, and build resilient communities. Learn more at [reinvestment.com](https://reinvestment.com).

### CONTACT US

Visit [www.reinvestment.com/philadelphiafoodjusticeinitiative](https://www.reinvestment.com/philadelphiafoodjusticeinitiative)

Reinvestment Fund is available to answer questions related to the program, call 215-574-5862 or email [phillyfoodjustice@reinvestment.com](mailto:phillyfoodjustice@reinvestment.com).

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