



**new
roots**

2023 IMPACT REPORT

New Roots at a glance



67

urban garden & farms



13

IRC locations



Program areas:



urban farming



youth programs



healthy food markets
and giveaways



garden-based
community & wellness
events



nutritious food
navigation

*"Thanks to IRC I can save money,
help the kids' diet, and meet a lot
of people."*

2023 Impacts Magnified...

1,290

Program
participants

16,645

Community members
shopping, receiving
emergency food, and
coming to garden events

53,000+

Estimated additional household
members who benefit



NEW ROOTS IS **growing**

IRC's New Roots has come a long way since it started in 2006. A ten-year comparison reveals some major areas of maturation:

● 2013

○ 2023

Number of **clients growing food:**

725



826



Amount of **land cultivated:**

408,000
sqft



2,532,000
sqft



Number of **farm and garden sites:**

48



67



Number of **markets** IRC managed or brokered:

6



31



Combined **farmer income:**

\$288,903



\$572,000



NEW ROOTS GROWS

healthy food

New Roots connects people to fresh and familiar produce. In 2023, **New Roots helped 288 newcomers to navigate their food sources, and supported 826 people to grow food** for their households. New Roots also moved local, culturally familiar produce into markets and pantries, **boosting access to healthy food** for the entire community.



95% of New Roots participants said they have **higher quality food** available to them



75% say they are **eating healthier** or have a **better diet** than a year ago

"Every time we go to the garden, I can pick enough to last 2-3 days. I can also provide extra vegetables to my brother and sister."



\$1.7 million worth of food assistance was distributed across all of IRC's US offices



12,000+ people shopped at New Roots markets in **low-food access communities**



53% of market income came from food benefits dollars

Everything here goes from farm to community, and we like it - everything's connected."



NEW ROOTS GROWS young leaders

"I grew up in a very tiny village. We didn't have a lot of different people around." Sarah Ram Tha Par reflects on her experience with the New Roots Youth Food Justice Program in Atlanta. **"The program helped me talk to others and relate to them...it made my view broader than it was before."**

These days, Sarah is in college pursuing a profession in the medical field, but she credits her time with New Roots as a key step towards this dream.

New Roots gardening and culinary programs use food as a tool to help youth grow their understanding of themselves, their peers, and their communities, as well as build many kinds of practical skills. Sarah also worked alongside other local food organizations and interacted with elementary schoolers in the garden. **"One thing that the program got me to do is introduce myself a lot. It helped me to speak out and step out of my comfort zone – and ask for help, too. I didn't know how to do that before."**

In addition, the program fostered links with her heritage: **"I'm from Burma, I was raised by farmers [and] have always been part of a farming family."** For Sarah, spending time in natural settings, learning about seeds and plant care, and then taking vegetables home to her family's apartment was important to her growing sense of self and cultural pride.

Sarah's story is just beginning, but so far she has already grown strong roots to nurture her pathway forward.



NEW ROOTS GROWS opportunity

New Roots is a strong driver of economic empowerment, helping families cut food costs while enabling participants to earn additional income or build skills for future employment. In 2023, **227 people sold produce they grew** through more than **31 market channels** set up by New Roots, including farm stands, restaurants, and grocery stores. Youth and adults also used agricultural and culinary spaces to **build skills and confidence** to take their next steps towards a more prosperous future.



Farmers grew **\$3,798,823**
worth of fresh fruits and vegetables



Farmers made over **\$572,000**
from sales through New Roots channels alone

"Selling produce helps me buy some of the things I can't afford on my salary. All of my salary goes to my bills."

"I make \$300-500 per week from sales of my vegetables during the growing season. I use New Roots income to pay my bills."

"I didn't need to grocery shop as often. And I was able to pay my other bills on time because wasn't spending as much money on food."



91% of participants reported saving money on groceries



Families saved an average of **\$46.86** per week during the food-growing season

NEW ROOTS GROWS community wellness

New Roots gardens and farms are more than just food-growing spaces; they're vibrant places for healing and reconnection. A **majority of people say they feel less stressed and healthier** because of their participation. In 2023, **178 community events strengthened bonds** among participants and facilitated cross-cultural linkages, nurturing a **sense of belonging**.



88% of people said they felt their health improved through more physical activity, reduced stress, better diets, or all three.

"I feel good about keeping my parents' legacy; they were farmers, and I am a farmer. Farming gives me the energy to go on."

"To farm here after farming in our home country makes us happy. When I am in my fields, I feel calm."



52% of participants said they met someone new outside of their immediate community or cultural group

"If there is no place to go, we go to the gardens to see other people, to communicate, to move physically to stay outside longer."



90% strengthened their social networks

99% said they would offer help to others

95% said they could solve problems as a group

70% said they would go to others for support

