

**Buncombe County FY2019 Strategic Partnership Grants
Application Summary Sheet**

Project	Building Demand for a Thriving Local Food System in Buncombe County
Organization	Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project

Amount Requested	\$30,000	Strategic Priority or Sustainability Goal	Thriving Local Food Systems
New or Renewal Request	Renewal	Area Served	Districts 1, 2 & 3

Organization Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASAP is a non-profit organization that helps local farms thrive, links farmers to markets and supporters, and builds healthy communities through connections to local food. ASAP runs three major programs that take a holistic approach to all aspects of the food system: the Local Food Campaign, the Growing Minds Farm to School program, and the Local Food Research Center.
Key Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote through media and events: including CSA Fair and Farm Tour, conduct outreach, provide farms with training and materials, conduct promotions, host fair and tour Training and assisting farmers in marketing and businesses planning through the Business of Farming Conference (manage logistics, develop content, conduct outreach, and host conference) and Appalachian Grown program (ongoing: certify farmers and business partners, provide training and market connections, offer materials/promotional support) Supporting food system connections through ASAP's Local Food Guide (conduct Guide outreach to farms and food businesses and update web database. Design and print 50,000 copies of the Guide and distribute copies)
People Served	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 139 farms (243 total farm operators) in Buncombe County, ranging in size from .25 acres to over 1500. 48% women, 36% limited resource, 32% new or beginning farmers (farming <10 years), and have an average age of 49. 168 local food businesses, including restaurants, caterers, groceries, artisans, distributors, and institutions.
Outcomes	<p>Success measures will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of Buncombe County farms local markets served # of Buncombe County direct market outlets supported # of Buncombe County businesses that feature local food and farms # of consumers reached through local food and farm community engagement events, promotions, and media.

Budget			
Amount Funded FY2018	\$25,000	Increase Request	\$5,000
Administrative Budget	16% (from 2016 IRS Form 990)	Total Organization Budget	\$1,497,320 (Projected FY2019)
Other Funding Sources: Foundations, individual donations, public funding, sponsorships, conferences, sales, advertising fees, consulting fees			

Strengths
SMART Outcomes (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and, time-bound)
Strong implementation plan
Well-linked, creative, and/or non-traditional partnerships

Building Demand for a Thriving Local Food System in Buncombe County

FY2019 Strategic Partnership Grants

Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project

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Application Form

Question Group

Project Name*

Name of Project.

Building Demand for a Thriving Local Food System in Buncombe County

Amount Requested*

\$30,000.00

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Area Served*

Which areas of the County will be served by this project? Which Commissioner District(s) will be served?

A Buncombe County Commissioner district map is available at [THIS LINK](#).

This project will serve all of Buncombe County, including Commissioner District 1, District 2, and District 3. Building demand for local food and increasing local outlets for farms (restaurants, retail, tailgate markets, community supported agriculture (CSA) programs, etc.) not only involves engaging and connecting consumers, but building the capacity of area farms to serve those outlets. Working across urban and rural area of the county, building reliable resources and community connections, and working towards long term goals, we can support a thriving local food system.

Organization Description*

Tell us about your organization. What is your mission? Highlight two or three key facts and accomplishments that best define your organization.

A leader in the local food movement for nearly two decades, ASAP is a non-profit organization that helps local farms thrive, links farmers to markets and supporters, and builds healthy communities through connections to local food. ASAP runs three major programs that take a holistic approach to all aspects of the food system: the Local Food Campaign, the Growing Minds Farm to School program, and the Local Food Research Center.

ASAP's organizational capacity is demonstrated by key accomplishments including our annual Business of Farming Conference, held in Buncombe County since 2004, providing trainings and networking to thousands of farmers and businesses. ASAP facilitates connections and builds relationships to support the development of a thriving local food system by creating resources such as our Local Food Guide, one of the most developed in the country, and offering opportunities for the community to connect directly with area farms including farmers markets and farm tours.

Strategic Priority*

Which of the following priorities best reflects the primary goal of your project?

Buncombe County Commissioners are dedicated to strengthening the quality of life for everyone by setting new fiscally, socially and environmentally responsible goals that will guide decisions and improve our community for future generations. The Board has committed to strategic priorities as a guide to shape partnerships and investments of resources to insure a healthy, safe, well-educated, thriving and sustainable community.

Details about the Strategic Priorities are available at [THIS LINK](#).

Other Sustainability Goal

Strategic Priority - Other Sustainability Goal

If you selected "Other Sustainability Goal" from the list of Strategic Priorities, please list it here.

Details about the Sustainability Goals are available at [THIS LINK](#).

Thriving Local Food Systems, Increase demand for locally produced foods

Shared Vision*

What critical community problem or challenge are you hoping to improve through this project?

Thriving local food systems are a powerful tool for building community resilience and strengthening local economies. While Buncombe County is seen as a leader in the local food movement nationwide, local food system development is a long-term strategy that continues to need strategic support. Despite the increase in the visibility of farms in our region and the influx of younger farmers drawn to the area, we face a dramatic transition over the next ten years. In 2012 (the last Ag Census), 58% of farmers in Buncombe County were 60 or older (including 25% that are 70 or older). Between 1997 and 2012 Buncombe county lost more than 200 farms and 20,000 acres of farmland. During that time frame we saw a shift away from tobacco and an increase in fruit and vegetable production, but in order for aging farmers to successfully transition farms to the next generation there must be an increased demand from consumers and a diversity of market opportunities.

Key Steps*

How will the project work? What are specific activities and milestones that your project entails?

This project will directly support Buncombe County's Sustainability Goal for Thriving Local Food Systems by:

Driving demand and promoting local food, farms, and businesses through media and events (July 2018-June 2019), including CSA Fair and Farm Tour (Feb - June 2019: conduct outreach, provide farms with training and materials, conduct promotions, host fair and tour)

Training and assisting farmers in marketing and businesses planning through the Business of Farming Conference (Nov 2018-Feb 2019: manage logistics, develop content, conduct outreach, and host conference)

and Appalachian Grown program (ongoing: certify farmers and business partners, provide training and market connections, offer materials/promotional support)

Supporting food system connections through ASAP's Local Food Guide (Nov 2018-Feb 2019: conduct Guide outreach to farms and food businesses and update web database. Feb-April 2019: design and print 50,000 copies of the Guide. April-June 2019: distribute copies)

People Served*

Who are the members of our community this project will serve? How many people will be served? Include demographics, including age, area median income, race, neighborhood and/or school.

While local food systems work has a wide range of impact on multiple levels, the measures for this project will focus on the impacts on local farms and food businesses in Buncombe County. ASAP currently works with 139 farms (243 total farm operators) in Buncombe County, ranging in size from .25 acres to over 1500. Farmers we work with in the county are 48% women, 36% limited resource, 32% new or beginning farmers (farming <10 years), and have an average age of 49. Additionally this project will also serve 168 local food businesses, including restaurants, caterers, groceries, artisans, distributors, and institutions. The majority of these businesses are locally owned and operated, ranging in size from small artisan producers (jams, cheeses, specialty goods) to large retail grocery chains, and represent all three county districts.

Partners*

Which other organizations are you working with to reach your goals? What other local organizations provide similar services or serve similar beneficiaries, and how do you work together?

ASAP is currently partnering with Mountain BizWorks, NC Cooperative Extension, Buncombe County Health and Human Services, and the City of Asheville on farmer training and assistance, Asheville City Market, and SNAP/EBT outreach/education to increase access at farmers markets. In addition to non-profit and government agencies ASAP partners with area businesses to increase awareness and viability of local farms, direct consumer demand, and increase market opportunities. The Organic Growers School (OGS) also supports farms in our region, but has more of a production focus and works primarily with organic farms. ASAP partners with OGS on some farmer training, including our conference; this year they are presenting and sending farmers from their programs to learn more about marketing and market connections. In addition to those managed by ASAP, there are 10 other farmers markets in the county that ASAP works with to share best practices and meet shared goals through county wide promotions.

Personnel*

Who is responsible for the project? Briefly describe project leaders and the role each will play in the project. How do these leaders reflect the population or community that you serve?

Molly Nicholie, the director of ASAP's Local Food Campaign, will lead this project. With 12 years of experience in local food systems work, including co-managing a 100-acre farm, Molly will provide group and 1:1 training for farmers and local food buyers, as well as collaborate with ASAP staff and community partners to implement project activities. Mike McCreary and David Smiley will also provide leadership in the project; combined they bring a wealth of experience with farmers market management and other direct market channels including CSAs and knowledge of the ins and outs of working farms. In addition to leading ASAP event logistics, serving more than 300 farmers and 2,000 consumers annually, Robin Lenner coordinates community engagement activities and ASAP's volunteer and internship program. Lee Seabrook conceptualizes and creates all of ASAP's graphic design (Local Food Guide, farmer profiles, promotional materials for retailers), offering more than 20 years of experience.

Success*

How will you measure results? What will success look like? How will you document the impact of your project? Include whether there is a model that serves as basis for project design.

The goal of this work is strengthening the Buncombe County local food system through the development of wider and deeper connections in the community, increasing farmers' business and marketing skills, and developing diverse and consistent markets for local farm products. Success measures will include:

number of Buncombe County farms serving local markets supported and sustained by this project

number of Buncombe County direct market outlets supported by project activities

number of Buncombe County businesses that feature local food and farms

number of consumers reached through local food and farm community engagement events, promotions, and media.

ASAP conducts ongoing evaluation to measure the impacts of work and improve services. To document impact ASAP will conduct post-training surveys, an annual survey with the farmers and businesses served, and surveys with attendees of local food/farm events.

Funding*

What is your plan for finding the balance of the project budget? What is your funding timeline and what are your other sources of support?

This project is additionally supported by secured Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation support (for 2018) and ASAP earned income sources, including Business of Farming Conference sponsorship/registration and Local Food Guide advertising. Earned income and expenses for the Local Food Guide and the Conference occur in the first half of the year. Support from the Buncombe County Strategic Partnership Fund allows for increased services, outreach, promotion, and activities in Buncombe County. This project supports ASAP's mission and the County's economic sustainability goals.

Sustainability*

How will this project be maintained? Please describe funding sources and how you plan to sustain the project in future years.

To maintain the sustainability of our programs, ASAP strives to diversify funding and build revenue streams. We continue to build earned income sources, including sponsorship for events, registration for conferences/training, and ad sales for the print edition of the Local Food Guide. Additional support from grant funding allows us to increase outreach and promotions, keep services, materials, and resources affordable for farms and local food businesses, and offer individualized support where needed. ASAP has built our capacity as an organization to strategically and effectively build connections across the local food system, consistently building on public and private partnerships to serve farmers, area businesses, and local communities.

ATTACHMENTS

Project Budget*

Download the budget form at [THIS LINK](#).

Complete the budget form for this project and the overall organization.

Save it to your computer, then upload it.

BUDGET Strategic-partnership-grants-FY2019 (2).xlsx

Financial Statements*

Upload a copy of the most recently completed financial statements.

All financial statements must be audited, reviewed or compiled by a certified public accountant and include a full balance sheet, income statement, and cash flow statement.

If your organization does not have financial statements, briefly state the reason.

ASAP 2016 Final Audit Report.%2F Financial Statements.pdf

IRS Form 990*

Upload a copy of the 990 nonprofit tax reporting form that you most recently completed.

If your organization does not have a 990, briefly state the reason.

ASAP 2016 Form 990 Final for Public Inspection.pdf

Board of Directors List*

Upload a current list of your organization's Board of Directors.

If your organization does not have a board of directors, briefly state the reason.

ASAP 2018 Board of Directors List.pdf

Authorized Signatory

By typing in below the name of the authorized signatory and date of submittal, you acknowledge that your governing body has authorized this application, that it is true and current to your knowledge. As a condition of any

grant awarded, this organization will provide all information in the manner described in the contract to be executed between the organization and Buncombe County or its designee, including program and financial reporting.

Name & Date

Charlie Jackson, 2/9/2018