



Case for Support

Growing our Local Food Economy in Central Vermont

These are difficult times and food costs keep going up.

Our mainstream food economy divides people into those who can afford healthy meals and those who must settle for cheaper, less nourishing food. Some have to choose between paying for food and paying for heat. At the same time, farmers growing healthy food have trouble making a living.

Our mission is to grow our local food economy with community commitment to supporting our farmers and making sure everyone is well fed. We started in Stockbridge during the pandemic and have now expanded into surrounding communities.

Sharing our commitment

We are committed to:

- Buying ingredients from local farmers and independent or community-owned markets
- Paying local cooks to transform fresh local ingredients into high-quality prepared meals
- Offering these healthy meals to everyone in Stockbridge and surrounding towns
- Asking people to pay as they are able, more if they can, less or nothing if they cannot

Stockbridge Community Meals invites you to share our commitment by:

- Providing consistent and ongoing support with a recurring monthly donation or by joining our prepared food CSA (\$7.50 to \$100/week)
- Making a one-time financial contribution in any amount as an organization, foundation, or individual
- Enjoying the food and paying as you are able in the lockbox or via Venmo

Buying local products and services

We need our farmers. Our farmers need us. We need each other, all of us. And if enough of us from every income level consistently buy local, we can take care of one another.

Stockbridge Community Meals sources food as locally as possible, featuring Birdsong Farm in Stockbridge and Luna Bleu Farm and Roma's Butchery in Royalton. Meanwhile, we are always looking to expand our list of farmers. We also buy ingredients from the South Royalton Market, a local community cooperative, which itself buys from local farmers.

Our cooks are community members: Beata Rusch gained experience with food and beverages at Killington Ski Resort and is the parent of a child at Stockbridge Central School. Willy Walker has years of experience as a chef (Three Stallion Inn and many others), a caterer, and the Director of Food Services for several area schools. Each cook works in a certified kitchen, one of which is in the Stockbridge Central School right next to our Stockbridge distribution center.

Our customers are diverse

Our customers range from community members experiencing severe food insecurity to elders on fixed incomes to convalescents just coming out of the hospital to busy parents who appreciate prepared meal convenience to other community members who can pay at cost or more and are passionate about supporting our farmers and providing inclusive food access:

Rene Yvon of Stockbridge tells us that without Stockbridge Community Meals, he does not know how he would be eating. ***“Currently I’m financially overstressed and have health issues: I recently became a diabetic. I am looking for good food. You guys have helped me tremendously. Thank you very much.”***

Will Taggart, an octogenarian door-to-door delivery customer in Stockbridge tells us that he gets 6 servings out of the two containers we deliver every week, adding that he enjoys eating meals that he probably would not have tried on his own.

The Rebuild Rochester Foundation (RRF) is a prepared food CSA subscriber that serves residents of Rochester who are experiencing challenges associated with illness or other causes of nutritional insecurity. RRF board member Kathryn Schenkman states, ***“Stockbridge Community Meals is an excellent resource. Through our collaboration with SCM, RRF has been able to help stabilize the lives of neighbors in need by arranging door-to-door delivery of high quality, locally sourced meals. SCM is a gift to our shared community for which we are deeply grateful.”***

Helena Lam, a busy mother of young children and a CSA subscriber picking up in Rochester, says ***“We very much appreciate this service - anytime we do not need to cook is a win - the SCM food is delicious and it’s great to be able to pick it up in Rochester.”***

John Roe of Sharon, a donor and CSA subscriber picking up in South Royalton, says ***“I am motivated to support Stockbridge Community Meals both as a parent of farmers, wanting to strengthen our local food economy, and as a community member, wanting my fellow community members to be well fed.”***

We offer prepared meals at multiple locations

- Available for Stockbridge residents and non-residents alike, weekdays 2:45 to 7:00 in the concession stand next to the Stockbridge Central School
- Weekly drop-offs for prepared food CSA subscribers in South Royalton, Barnard, Bethel, Randolph & Rochester
- Door-to-door deliveries for seniors in these communities

Sliding payment scales

Our sliding scales are designed to maximize accessibility on the lower end while providing opportunities for those who can pay more to help those who cannot:

- Our meals are available in Stockbridge for residents and non-residents alike on a sliding scale from free to cost plus
- Our sliding scale for out-of-town CSA subscribers begins at \$15/week for two meal servings (to cover our costs) with many subscribers opting to pay more
- Our senior sliding scale is \$10-\$40/week for two containers (four meal servings) makes our meals accessible for seniors at the lower end with many seniors grateful for the opportunity to help others by paying more

Serving meals to our community

- Stockbridge Community Meals currently distributes 270 meal servings a week
- Our costs for locally-sourced largely organic prepared food average \$7.50/meal serving
- In the last year we provided 14,000 meal servings
- All of the \$104,000 that we spent went to local cooks, farms, and small businesses

Reusable Containers

Our meals come in reusable glass containers that can go straight from the freezer to the microwave or the oven. We ask customers to return them for reuse.

Asking for help

Stockbridge Community Meals is committed to supporting our farmers and providing wholesome prepared meals for people with varying abilities to pay, including those who cannot pay at all. We invite you to help close the gap between our project costs and the income we are able to generate.

All donations are gratefully accepted.

Many thanks,

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