



Dickinson College Farm
Community Food Waste to Energy
Small Farm Anaerobic Digestion and Education



KEEP PENNSYLVANIA BEAUTIFUL
HEALING THE PLANET
FINAL REPORT 2023

Healing the Planet Grants

Healing the Planet 2023 was a competitive grant program in support of projects that address food waste prevention, reduction and recovery across The GIANT Company's operating area. Funded projects addressed food waste prevention, reduction and/or recovery; community composting; increased access to compost for agricultural producers; educational programs regarding food waste prevention, reduction and recovery; and diversion of food waste from landfills and community gardens with a food waste prevention, reduction and/or recovery component, such as education. Selected applicants were located in The GIANT Company's operating areas within Pennsylvania and were on public land or for public use and benefit.

The GIANT Company and Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful awarded 23 Healing the Planet grants ranging from \$2,500 up to \$20,000, totaling \$300,000. Funding for the grants was provided by customers at GIANT, MARTIN'S and GIANT Heirloom Market stores who rounded up their grocery purchase to the nearest dollar from March through May 2023.

The GIANT Company

The GIANT Company believes that no matter where or how, when meals happen, families connect, and when families connect meaningfully, good happens. Guided by its brand platform, For Today's Table®, the omnichannel retailer proudly serves millions of neighbors across Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and New Jersey. With more than 36,000 talented team members supporting 193 stores, 132 pharmacies, 107 fuel stations, and over 185 online pickup hubs and grocery delivery service in hundreds of zip codes, The GIANT Company is changing the customer experience and connecting families for a better future. Founded in 1923 in Carlisle, Pa., The GIANT Company family of brands includes GIANT, MARTIN'S, GIANT Heirloom Market, GIANT Direct and MARTIN'S Direct. The GIANT Company is a company of Ahold Delhaize USA. For more information, visit the [GIANT](#) or [MARTIN'S](#) websites.

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has supported community improvement initiatives and has encouraged community leadership, responsibility and a respect for the environment since 1990. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's core programming focuses on litter and illegal dump prevention and cleanup, community greening, proper waste handling and sustainable practices. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful works with many partnering organizations on the state and grassroots level to accomplish our vision of a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. The Healing the Planet Community Grants are an appropriate way to support the noble and necessary work being implemented by area nonprofits, government agencies and local government to improve communities across the state and surrounding area.



South Philadelphia Community Fridge, Philadelphia County

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Community Food Waste to Energy

Small Farm Anaerobic Digestion and Education

Dickinson College Farm, Cumberland County

The Dickinson College Farm, in partnership with Triple L Farm Dairy, constructed an anaerobic digester (biodigester) system for converting food waste and animal manure into renewable electricity and crop fertilizer in Cumberland County, PA. Through the biological processes of microbial fermentation and methanogenesis, community food waste and dairy manure are processed into biogas, a renewable, combustible fuel that is used like natural gas. Biogas is used to produce electricity for feeding the power grid and results in climate-friendly power that is carbon neutral, or in some cases carbon-negative.

This project makes use of newly developed engine technology to implement a biodigester shared between two small farms, with 100-150 cows plus 2-3 tons per day of community food waste. The newly developed Dickinson - Triple L Farm biodigester system provides a working model of a family farm-scaled energy system for public, youth, and farmer education, with the goal of stimulating further development of this technology in the Mid-Atlantic in the coming years.

Guests at the biodigester project have included home school kindergarten groups, high school AP science classes, 4H summer camp, a Future Farmers of America annual gathering, the Governor of Pennsylvania and PA Secretary of Agriculture.



"Biodigesters help solve many environmental challenges while also strengthening farms. We invite anyone interested to learn from our project. We're grateful for the support of The GIANT Company and Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful."

- Matt Steiman, Energy Projects Manager, Dickinson College Farm



Partners

Center for Dairy Excellence
Cumberland County
Pasa Sustainable Agriculture
Penn State Extension
Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania
Triple L Farm Dairy



AGAPE Emergency Food Pantry

AGAPE: Love From Above To Our Community,
Columbia County

AGAPE utilized grant funds to purchase a freezer and a merchandiser cooler, significantly increasing food storage capacity to meet the growing demand in the area. This enhancement is crucial as food is often needed outside of regular distribution times. The new freezer and cooler enable the storage of more ready-to-eat items for the unhoused and those experiencing crises. Since acquiring these storage units, there has been a 30% increase in the number of clients served. Additionally, clients are regularly educated on the difference between "best by" and expiration dates.

Community meals have been reintroduced throughout the week. When clients come for a warm, cooked meal, they can also access additional emergency assistance food as needed. For instance, one Friday night, as AGAPE was closing, a fire victim arrived with nothing but the clothes on their back. AGAPE was able to provide them with a box of food that required little to no preparation, suitable for keeping in a hotel room.



Partners

The GIANT Company
Sheetz
Panera
Aldi
Starbucks
Central PA Food Bank

"AGAPE was here when I had nothing. They truly did help feed my family when I had nothing."

~ AGAPE client

Community Food Waste Reduction in Delaware County

Pennsylvania Resources Council, Inc. (PRC), Delaware County

The "Community Food Waste Reduction in Delaware County" project had a positive impact on the community by promoting sustainable food waste prevention and composting practices. Through free Backyard Composting Workshops offered to residents in designated environmental justice areas, PRC enabled individuals to actively reduce food waste and divert organic materials from landfills to composting. Participants acquired practical skills and knowledge that they could implement in their daily routines, resulting in long-term environmental benefits and enhanced community resilience. Additionally, the hands-on nature of the workshops helped demystify the composting process, making it accessible and manageable for everyone involved. One hundred compost bins were distributed that included informational fact sheets addressing food waste and composting. Leaving the workshop, 83% of respondents felt confident in their ability to start composting. In a follow-up survey, 85% of respondents reported to have set up their compost bin. Many respondents also reported an increased awareness of the amount of waste they generate and are now making attempts to throw away as little as possible.



Partners

Delaware County Parks and Recreation Department
Eastern Delaware County Stormwater Collaborative (Lansdowne Library)

"Thanks to the Healing the Planet grant funding, we were able to offer composting classes in environmental justice areas and provide free education and compost bins to 100 families."

~Diana Andrejczak, Eastern Program Director

PACS Food Recovery and Pop-up Food Distribution

Phoenixville Area Community Services Inc., Chester County

The \$20,000 Healing the Planet Grant was combined with \$50,000 from the PA Department of Agriculture to purchase a refrigerated van and cover the associated vehicle and travel expenses. The purchase brought Phoenixville Area Community Services Inc.'s (PACS) fleet of refrigerated vans to three, enabling them to complete even more pickups from area food providers. The recovered food is used to stock the PACS Market, which is open to everyone and serves an average of 3,346 visitors each month.

This grant contributed to the continued growth and success as a food center for the greater Phoenixville area. In Fiscal Year 2023-2024, PACS provided direct food aid a total of 46,331 times and recovered a total of 708,079 pounds of food. Over 272,000 pounds of food was diverted from the landfill.

Partners

Fiorenza's Food For Friends (F4)
Fourteen area food providers
Philabundance's Grocers Against Hunger program



"The third refrigerated van has enabled us to expand to pick up from five new sites, which has resulted in an additional 14,240 pounds of food recovered in just these past four months."

~ Mike Claus, Food Recovery Relations Manager

Horn Farm Center Composting Program

Horn Farm Center for Agricultural Education, York County

Highlighting a commitment to sustainable practices and community education, the Horn Farm Center built a new three-bin compost system in their demonstration field, serving as a practical example for visitors and participants. Additionally, a large two-bin compost system was built in their community gardens to accommodate the growing needs of local gardeners and allowing for expansion. The new systems support several education programs, including backyard composting workshops and gardening programs. Seventy-three composting workshops provided materials and hands-on instruction to groups on how to compost at home. In addition, the new composting infrastructure is highly visible to over 3,000 visitors each year. Prior to this project, community gardeners did not have access to compost infrastructure or composting education.

These new additions divert biodegradable material from the local waste stream (landfills and incinerators). The new systems produced approximately four tons of compost in the first year. An annual five-ton return of nutrient-rich compost is anticipated once the systems and processes mature. The finished compost plays a critical role in enhancing food production on the farm, contributing to more robust crops and healthier soil, by reducing the need for chemical fertilizers.



Partners

York County Solid Waste Authority



Thanks to the generous support of The GIANT Company and Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, the Horn Farm Center is reducing waste on the farm and teaching our community to do the same in their homes and communities!

- Alexis Campbell, Executive Director

Continued Expansion of Compost Co-Op

City of Lancaster, Lancaster County

The City of Lancaster has successfully installed four compost bins at its inaugural community garden. The compost bins play a crucial role in diverting food waste from the landfill, significantly decreasing the volume of waste in the local waste stream. By minimizing the need for waste transportation, the compost bins help reduce carbon emissions, positively impacting both the City of Lancaster and the broader community.

Two raised garden beds have been constructed and strategically placed near an established pollinator garden at the Buchanan Park compost bin location. This initiative aims to pilot the integration of gardens with the compost co-op. The gardens will serve as an invaluable educational resource, teaching residents of all ages about gardening, healthy eating and composting. Additionally, they will continue to strengthen community bonds and foster engagement with residents and partners, including the School District of Lancaster and their Edible Classroom.

The acquisition of additional sifters, totes, shovels, spade forks and tarps for each bin location has significantly boosted productivity and improved the health and capacity of the compost bins. Furthermore, the development of a branded program will help establish a distinct identity, enhancing recognition and respect for the Compost Co-Op. This program will provide comprehensive information about the Compost Co-Op, including details on events, bin locations, orientations, educational resources, and much more.

We are so proud of what has been accomplished thanks to The Giant Company and Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful. Because of this grant, our partners in the community and our dedicated volunteers we continue to grow and to make a difference in the community and the environment. We will continue to strive to inspire those around us here and beyond the City of Lancaster.

~ Gabrielle Diakow Herwig, Supervisor of Sustainability & Solid Waste, City of Lancaster



Partners

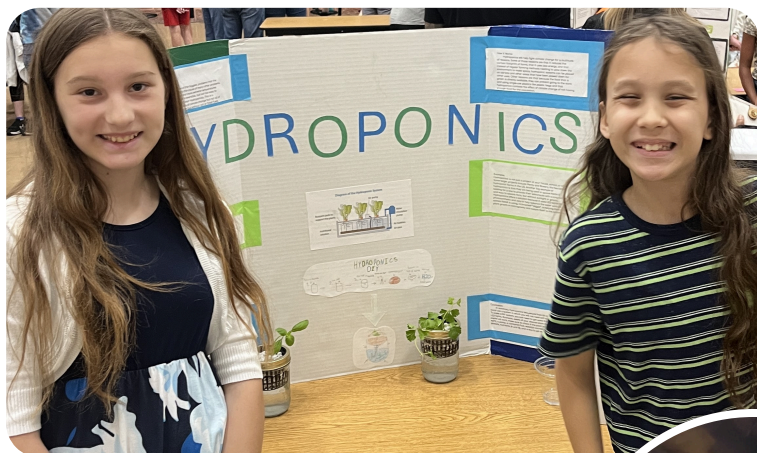
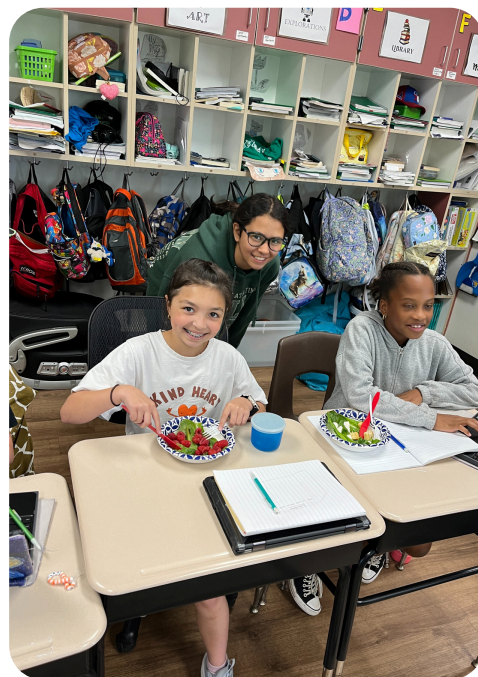
Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
City of Lancaster
Jeff Feeman, Industrial Designer
Jean-Marie Markel, Digital Designer
SoWe (Lancaster Southwest Community)



Flex Farm

Evergreen Elementary School, Perkiomen Valley School District,
Montgomery County

The Flex Farm incorporated a hydroponic garden and food composter into the classroom that had a profound impact on students, enhancing their engagement and understanding of sustainability, science and nutrition. The hydroponic garden provided hands-on learning opportunities, allowing students to observe plant growth, understand the importance of water and nutrient cycles and apply scientific concepts in a practical setting. The school community was provided with nutritious foods, with zero “food miles,” and students received lessons that helped them engage with and understand the local food system. The food composter taught them about waste reduction and soil health, emphasizing the value of recycling organic matter. Together, these tools fostered a sense of responsibility and curiosity, encouraging students to take an active role in environmental stewardship and healthy eating habits. Additionally, by the end of the school year, school staff began working with the school’s kitchen to incorporate the plants into school lunches.



Partners

Fluxspace Innovations, LLC.
Fork Farms



“This project was a major success, the kids got so much out of it! Throughout the year, we continued to make connections to topics such as food waste, composting and carbon footprints. Of all the projects I’ve ever managed with students, this was by far the most meaningful.” ~ Jess Capece, Project Manager

Benner Composting Project

Benner Elementary School, Centre County

Benner Elementary School students actively participated in composting food scraps from the cafeteria. They gained firsthand experience by watching food scraps transform into nutrient-rich compost. The compost was used in garden beds before planting summer crops, such as tomatoes, carrots, peppers, potatoes, spinach, lettuce, radishes and watermelons, which were harvested in the fall.

Students had the opportunity to taste the produce grown in the garden and learned first-hand about making healthy vegetable choices. Additionally, they learned the crucial role of pollinators in maintaining a thriving garden and a healthy environment. This initiative's impact reached far beyond the school grounds. Parents and community volunteers joined in, lending their support to the garden throughout the school year and summer months, making it a true community effort.



Partners

College Gardens
Benner Elementary School Personnel
Benner Elementary School Parent Volunteers
Your Building Center
Mayes Custom Construction
Penn State Master Gardner Program



Keep PA Beautiful has contributed significantly to the improvement of our garden, enhancing its appeal for both our students and the community, catering to their intellectual curiosity!

~ Lata Anantheswaran, Project Director

Friends Community Fridge

Arch Street Meeting House Preservation Trust, Philadelphia County

The Friends Community Fridge expanded access to fresh foods in a major food desert from the Delaware River to the Schuylkill River, from Spring Garden Street to South Street, a huge geographic and densely populated area that previously did not have access to community food resources. The installation of the Friends Community Fridge addressed the immediate needs of hundreds of food-insecure families and those suffering from houselessness. The grant led to the establishment of new community partners and increased engagement that has increased donations to the fridge and food pantry. The Friends Community Fridge led the way for a separate Quaker food pantry near City Hall.

"This community fridge is the first of its kind in Center City Philadelphia. We are glad to be trend setters, providing food to vulnerable populations in Philadelphia's downtown."

~ Sean Connolly, Executive Director



Partners

Friends of Philadelphia
Philly Style Bagels
Sharing Excess



Compost Coalition: A Community Composting Project

Creative Community Grow, Dauphin County

Creative Community Grow has successfully provided the community with a safe and engaging space to learn about composting, gardening, food and the cycle of life through Earth and nature. This initiative has reached a diverse audience, including students from kindergarten through grade 12, college students, adults and seniors. Participants have gained hands-on experience through workshops, volunteer days, classes and more. For many, this was their first exposure to composting, allowing them to see and understand the process firsthand. Two permanent compost bins and two temporary, portable compost bins were built. Two existing bins were refurbished, and three hands-on workshops were held. A total of 40 workdays were organized, enabling volunteers to work directly with the compost.

This grant allowed Harrisburg and Dauphin County to open their first community composting bins, which is open to the public and free of charge. Local community members can drop off green waste from their own kitchens giving them the opportunity to have active participation in the composting process.

The Community Compost Coalition has partnered with schools and summer programs to educate students about composting, its benefits, and how to incorporate it into their daily lives. The Coalition has also received compost contributions from over five local small businesses and restaurants, as well as more than 20 households, effectively diverting this food waste from landfills.

"The Community Composting Coalition was the first of its kind in Harrisburg, and we are excited to further expand it in order to make our city a more progressive and responsible place to live in."

~ Leslie Avila, Program Director



Partners

Empower at the Bridge Foundation
Ngozi Let's Get Dirty, Inc.
ROOTS.

Feeding Hungry Kids While Reducing Waste

Riverside School District, Lackawanna County

The implementation of food carts in schools transformed the way excess food is handled, turning potential waste into valuable resources for students in need while significantly reducing the amount of food waste. Sealed food items and fruit left over from student lunches are collected on carts and redistributed to students who may be facing food insecurity. At the elementary level, students help themselves to food items, ensuring they have access to nutritious snacks throughout the day. For older students, food is assembled into bags by the school club, ensuring fellow students have nutritious food to take home each evening and over the weekend. By redistributing surplus food to approximately 50 students per week, the project provides essential support to students experiencing food insecurity.

The Feeding Hungry Kids While Reducing Waste project has a direct impact on their well-being and academic performance. By alleviating hunger, students stay focused and better engaged in their studies. This project has fostered a sense of community and caring within the schools. Students, teachers, and staff work together to support the initiative, reinforcing the importance of helping one another. School club involvement provided students with a meaningful way to contribute to their community. The project has also provided invaluable lessons, teaching students about the importance of reducing waste, the impact of food insecurity and the value of community service. The implementation of food carts successfully diverted approximately 500 pounds of food from landfills. This achievement not only promoted environmental sustainability but also encouraged students to be more mindful of their food consumption and waste.



Partners

Riverside School District Principals
Riverside School Students
Riverside School Food Service Staff
Riverside School Parents and Community Volunteers

"Our food cart initiative has not only reduced waste but has also provided essential support to our students facing food insecurity. By fostering a culture of sharing and sustainability, we've created a community where every student feels cared for and valued. This project has also ensured that hungry kids have access to nutritious food, helping them thrive both in and out of the classroom."

~ Paul Brennan, Superintendent of Schools



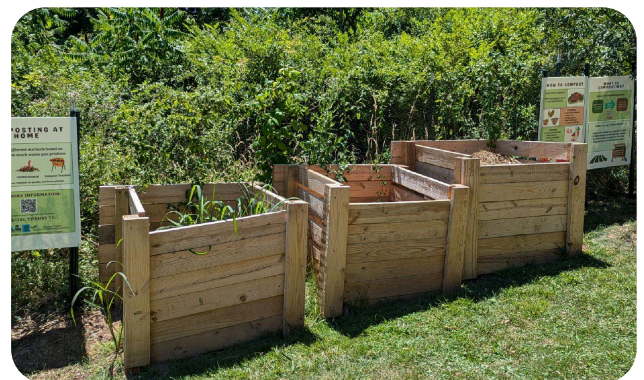
Community Compost Education and Food Waste Reduction

Indiana County Conservation District, Indiana County

Indiana County has successfully established three community composting locations: Indiana Community Garden (ICG), Chevy Chase Food Forest (CCFF), and the Indiana County Conservation District (ICCD). Each site hosted beginner composting workshops to educate the community on composting practices. Additionally, educational signage was installed at each location to guide visitors on proper composting techniques.

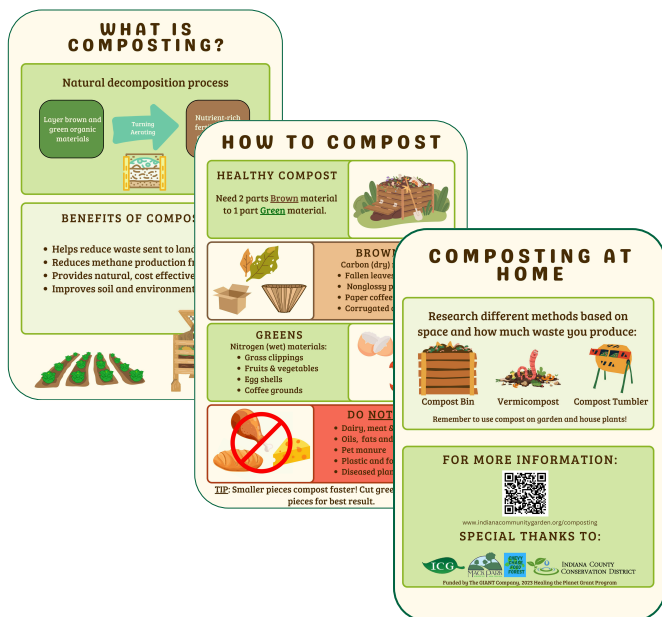
ICCD played a pivotal role in educating students across the county about composting. Topics covered included the basics of composting, acceptable and non-acceptable compost materials, various composting methods and the environmental and community benefits of composting. One school utilized a compost tumbler borrowed from ICCD in their school garden during the spring semester, allowing students to observe the composting process from start to finish.

The Environmental Discovery Center was equipped with textbooks, composting guides, and educational coloring books to cater to all age groups. Looking ahead, the plan for the 2024-2025 school year includes providing compost tumblers to Future Farmers of America chapters and school garden clubs, further promoting composting education and practices within the community.



Partners

Chevy Chase Food Forest (CCFF)
Indiana Community Garden (ICG)



"Implementing compost education signs and bins, creates not only a place of learning but a place of doing. Learning through action, I feel, can be one of the best ways of grasping a topic. Teaching about compost can lead to a decrease in waste at the landfill, assist in the growing process, and hopefully in turn helps the individual create a passion for the smaller elements in life that can truly make a difference!"

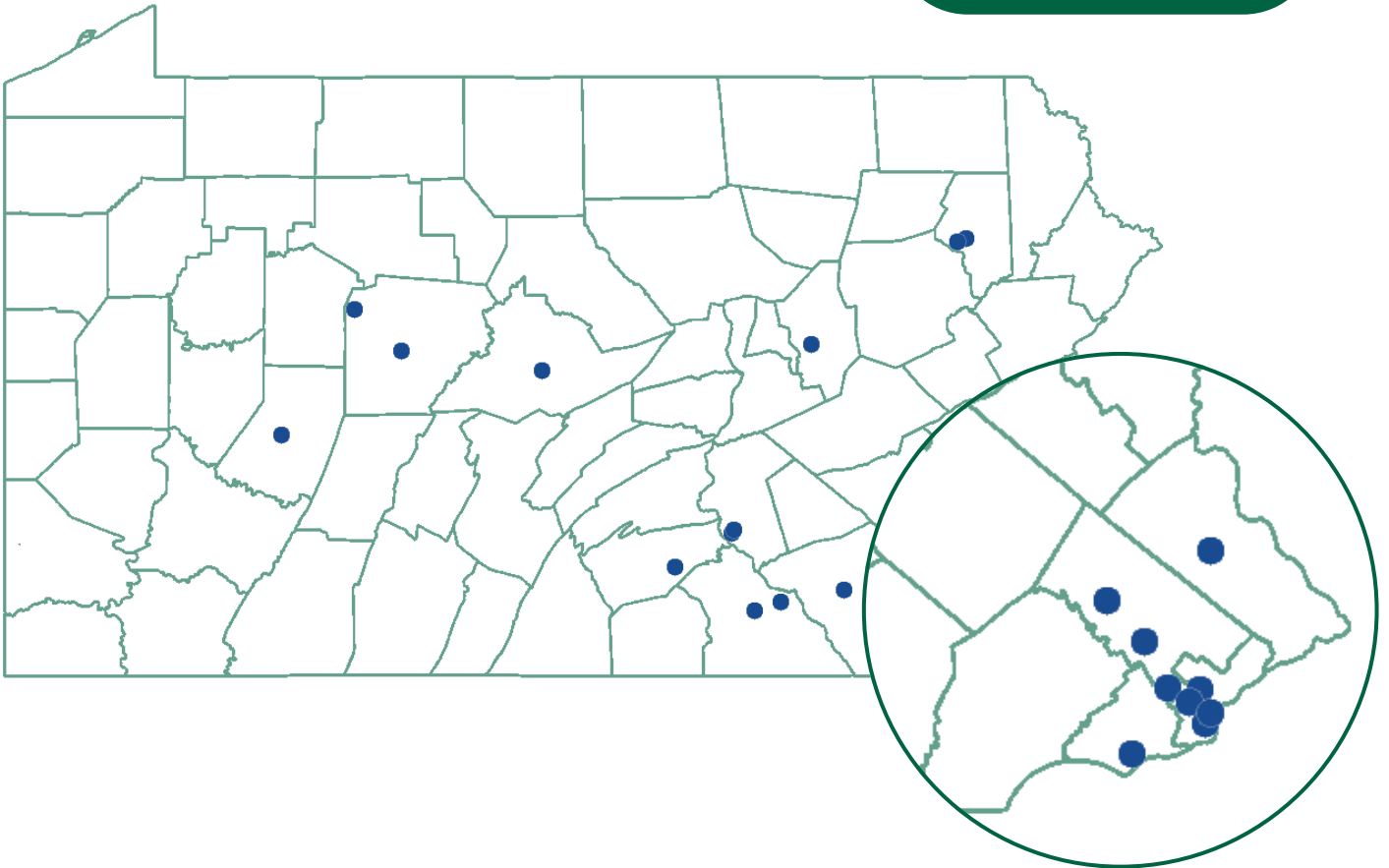
~ Blake Mauthe, AmeriCorps member – Indiana County Conservation District Educator

PROJECT LOCATIONS

Healing the Planet projects were located in The GIANT Company's operating areas within Pennsylvania and were required to be on public land or be for public use and benefit.

23

Projects that
addressed food waste
prevention, reduction
and recovery



Penbrook Lions and Leo Clubs
Dauphin County



Fairmount Park, Conservancy
Philadelphia County



Share Food Program,
Philadelphia County

Healing the Planet 2023

Grant Recipients

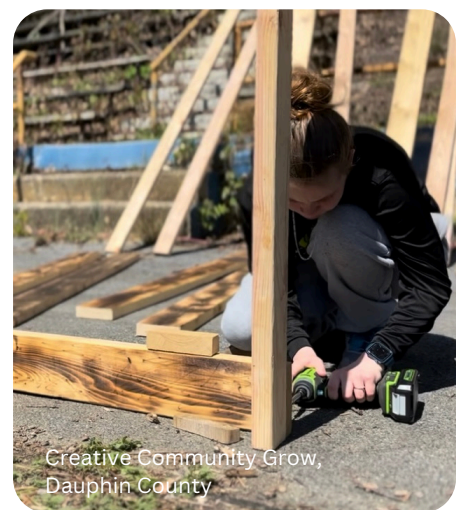
ACLAMO, Norristown, PA
AGAPE: Love From Above To Our Community, Bloomsburg, PA
Arch Street Meeting House Preservation Trust, Philadelphia, PA
Benner Elementary School, Bellefonte, PA
Bucks County Housing Group, Warminster, PA
Child Hunger Outreach Partners, Towanda, PA
City of Lancaster, Lancaster Compost Co-Op, Lancaster, PA
Creative Community Grow, Harrisburg, PA
Curwensville Area High School, Curwensville, PA
Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA
Evergreen Elementary School, Collegeville, PA
Fairmount Park Conservancy, Philadelphia, PA
Horn Farm Center for Agricultural Education, York, PA
Indiana County Conservation District, Indiana, PA
Penbrook Lions and Leo Clubs, Harrisburg, PA
Pennsylvania Resources Council, Delaware County, PA
Phoenixville Area Community Services Inc., Phoenixville, PA
Quiet Creek Herb Farm & School of Country Living, Brookville, PA
Riverside School District, Taylor, PA
Share Food Program, Philadelphia, PA
South Philadelphia Community Fridge (Project of Open Collective Foundation),
Philadelphia, PA
The Advocacy Project, Ardmore, PA
York Fresh Food Farms, York, PA

“Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is proud to support the many organizations, schools and cities who are using and creating inventive ways to assure food waste is being prevented, reduced and recovered. We are honored to continue our partnership with The GIANT Company to provide opportunities to improve the efficiencies of managing food waste within Pennsylvania communities.

~ Shannon Reiter, President, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful

2023 HEALING THE PLANET GRANTS IMPACT

Pounds of compost created	1,253,000
Pounds of food diverted from landfill	660,155
Number of meals served	377,284
Number of clients served	28,154
Number of people educated	7,808
Pounds of compost collected	5,078
Number of compost bins built or bought	146
Number of pieces of equipment purchased	447
Number of educational signs created	55
Number of gardens created	31



BY THE NUMBERS

Total budget for 23 projects	\$2,542,124
HTP Funding	\$300,000
Cash match	\$829,609
Number of Volunteers	1,009
Total Volunteer Hours	8,757
Value of Volunteer Time	\$293,272
Total budget +vol value	\$2,835,396

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

\$8 FOR EVERY \$1





"This project was a major success, the kids got so much out of it! Throughout the year, we continued to make connections to topics such as food waste, composting and carbon footprints. Of all the projects I've ever managed with students, this was by far the most meaningful."

~ Jess Capece, Project Manager, Flex Farm, Evergreen Elementary School, Perkiomen Valley School District, Montgomery County



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Empowering Pennsylvanians to keep our communities clean and beautiful.