A Healthy Food System, Caring Connections, Engaged Youth

2013 Annual Report
Why Ceres?

**Poor Diet now the #1 Risk Factor for Health Loss**
For the first time ever the Centers for Disease Control has named Dietary Risk the number one risk factor for health loss in the United States. When additional risk factors that also have poor diet as a cause (such as high cholesterol and high blood sugar) are included, the number of deaths that could have been prevented with a healthier diet climbs to 1,857,029 annually – 4 times as many as smoking, the next highest risk factor.

**Most of Us Still Don’t Know that Diet Matters**
The World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) found that 49% of Britons don’t know that diet affects people’s cancer risk – yet WCRF and American Cancer Society both say that about one-third of all cancers could be avoided by healthier eating habits and maintaining a healthy weight.

**Loneliness is as bad for our Health as a Poor Diet**
A recent study of people over 50 found that those who reported the highest levels of loneliness were twice as likely to die during the 6 year study. And a review of 148 studies involving more than 300,000 participants found that those with strong social relationships were 50% more likely to be alive an average of eight years later than those without – and that feeling lonely and isolated had a bigger impact on health than obesity.

**Our Food Choices Contribute to Climate Change**
Our food choices have a big impact on our environment. Here are a few examples from the Natural Resources Defense Council:

- If all Americans eliminated just one quarter-pound serving of factory farmed beef a week, the reduction in global warming gas emissions would be the equivalent of taking four to six million cars off the road.

- The average American meal includes ingredients from five foreign countries, and even domestically grown produce travels an average of 1,500 miles before it gets to your plate. The smog-forming emissions from produce imported to California are equivalent to the emissions from 1.5 million cars.
Dear Friends,

Since our founding in 2007, Ceres Community Project has been addressing the critical interconnection between some of the most pressing problems we face and modeling grassroots solutions that work. Rising rates of diet-related illness. A food system that doesn’t support the health of people or planet. The growing loneliness many of us face. Health care costs spiraling out of control.

As you’ll see throughout this year’s Annual Report, the research is overwhelming that what and how we eat is at the foundation of improving our health, reducing the burden health care costs have on our economy, and solving the environmental challenges we face.

The kinds of foods Ceres serves and recommends – whole grains, vegetables, legumes, wild caught seafood, pasture raised animal products, and healthy fats like nuts, avocados and olive oil – not only help our clients heal at a crucial time in their lives, they enable all of us to stay at a healthy weight and prevent chronic diseases like heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke and many types of cancer.

These food choices also have significant impacts on our environment, including reducing the use of toxic pesticides and herbicides and slowing the pace of climate change. The average food in the supermarket travels 1,500 miles and comes with packaging that ends up in our landfills. Factory farmed meats are a major source of water pollution and one of the leading causes of global warming through CO2 emissions.

And when we come together – all ages and from all walks of life – to prepare and share these foods with neighbors who need us, we forge bonds of caring connection that reduce loneliness and bring meaning to all of our lives.

This year we’re launching a campaign to empower action! What are you doing to improve your health, the health of your community and the health of our precious planet? We’ve shared 10 of our favorite actions on the card included with the Annual Report. We hope it will inspire you to action throughout the year ahead. Let us know what you are doing by emailing your stories, photos and videos to empoweredaction@ceresproject.org. Later this year we’ll be sharing all of our stories on a new special section of our website called Empowered Action.

Thank you for supporting Ceres and being part of the solution to some of the most fundamental issues of our time. The following pages tell just some of the stories of how our work together is changing and saving lives, and creating positive action to build healthier communities and a healthier future for all of us – one client, one teen and one nourishing meal at a time.

With blessings,

Cathryn Couch
Executive Director

Sharon Keating
Board President

Board of Directors

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Thais Harris
Nutrition Education Program Manager

Mudita Kristy Hinton
Assistant Chef & Teen Coordinator

Rob Hogencamp
Executive Chef

Margaret Howe
Associate Director

Deborah Kraft
Communications Assistant

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Garden Program Manager

Scott McDougall
Development Director

Deborah Ramelli
Communications Director

Sue Smith
Administration & Human Resources Director

Julie Stuffelbeam
Kitchen & Delivery Manager

Kim Stuffelbeam
Creative Director

photos & bios on the web at:
www.CeresProject.org/board.html
www.CeresProject.org/ambassadors.html
www.CeresProject.org/staff.html
At Ceres, teens are the primary chefs and gardeners growing and cooking organic nutritious meals for community members who face serious illness. Through Ceres, teens take their place as contributing members of their community and gain the skills and knowledge to live healthy, productive and engaged lives.

Teen Leaders at Ceres created this description of what it means to be a Ceres Teen Volunteer.

A Ceres Teen . . .
♥ Works as part of a unified team
♥ Takes responsibility
♥ Keeps his/her energy positive & enthusiastic
♥ Honors commitments
♥ Is caring & welcoming to all
♥ Puts passion & love into the food
♥ Looks for what is needed & does it

Why Ceres?
Because of what they’ve learned at Ceres:
50% more teens are encouraging friends and family to make healthier food choices
29% more teens are eating at least 3 servings of vegetables every day
28% more teens cook a full meal at home at least once a week
65% fewer teens regularly eat fast food

Alya Bohr
Sebastopol Teen Leader

Working with Ceres has made me realize that there’s much more to food than what it tastes like or even how healthy it is. All food has a story—who makes it, what conditions it’s made in, where it travels, what ingredients are used, how it affects the environment, etc.

When we have the choice between a bowl of vegetables and a bag of chips, it’s so much more complicated than what we feel like eating. Whatever we choose to eat, that’s the story we’re perpetuating. We can support local, healthy environmentally-conscious farmers and businesses or we can support large corporations that harm the environment, put chemicals in our food, and pay their workers low wages. We, as consumers, have much more power than we think, and it’s so important that we realize that and become characters in the right stories.

I truly understand and appreciate the effects that Ceres has because my dad received Ceres meals last year. It’s easy to overlook the value of food, but when my dad stopped having the energy to cook and was lacking much-needed nutrition, opening the refrigerator to find container after container of gorgeous healthy food honestly changed our lives.
Cyrus Borden
Sebastopol Teen Chef

I come to Ceres because of the person I am when I walk into the kitchen. It allows me to show up fully as the best person I can be.

Nick Eberhard
Marin Teen Chef

My 8th grade project was to figure out how to cook healthy meals that were tasty. I needed to spend 10 hours volunteering, and my mom found Ceres. That was six months ago! With my friends, I saw how food impacted their lives. Eating fast food made them tired. Food affects how teens feel and how they interact with other people.

The most important lessons I’ve learned at Ceres are to be grateful for what I have, and that it’s important to give back to your community. Ceres is the first place I’ve ever volunteered. It feels good to give back, and I was surprised by how much fun it is. I know I’ll continue to make volunteering a part of my life.

408
Total number of teens engaged
16,675
Total teen hours

Sebastopol kitchen, serving Sonoma County
304
Teens
14,610
Hours

San Rafael kitchen, serving Marin County
83
Teens
1,580
Hours

Sonoma kitchen, serving Sonoma Valley
21
Teens
485
Hours

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Marin Teen Chef

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Ceres’ mission is to support people in crisis due to a serious health challenge with nourishing meals, nutrition education and the caring support of the community. The meals we deliver relieve stress and strengthen clients’ foundational health to improve their quality of life and give them the best chance of recovering. They also help clients learn about healthy eating and make the changes that can help them – and their family members – live a long and healthy life.

In 2013 Ceres launched a second Sonoma County program site to better serve both clients and teens in the Sonoma Valley area. Operating out of the catering kitchen at the Hanna Boys Center, Ceres Sonoma Valley will provide more than 4,000 meals in 2014 to 25 to 30 client families and engage 40 to 50 youth.

Why Ceres?

Three months after completing the meal program our clients report:
- 42% increase in vegetable consumption
- 35% more likely to cook a meal from scratch at least several times a week
- 81% are eating less fast and processed food
- 100% say that the meals and what they learned were extremely important for their healing

Client Program

Robert Karcie
Sonoma County client undergoing treatment for cancer recurrence

Ceres has given me permission to try to eat in a different way. The other times (I was in treatment) it was just hard. I didn’t even want to eat. About all I could handle was cold popsicles. The Ceres food is just delicious. When the food was delivered, I enjoyed reading all the papers that came with it. It was so informative. When I learned that the food was being made by teens who are volunteering, what struck me was that everybody wins because we’re all learning together. It’s a community. What a gift!

I can’t believe that all of a sudden this has entered into my life because of illness. I can’t believe how powerful it is and how many people it touches. I’m real grateful.

Bridget Dorcy
Marin County client recovering from Breast cancer treatment

The healing Immune Broth was priceless. I found it highly addictive. It helped me recover my energy post-surgery. I truly, profoundly believe I could not have made it through this without Ceres and the incredible support of the meals and my liaison, Mary.
Imagine a world in which every person in crisis and battling severe illness was supported by a community that provided delicious, life-sustaining, immune-boosting, locally-sourced food, prepared with love and care. Perhaps we’d see cancer cure rates skyrocket. Perhaps we’d see people empowered for the fight...empowered to heal. And when they were well, these people would be inspired to pass the healing on. They’d share the wellness with their community. Their habits would be forever changed. They’d never look at food the same way again. And slowly, the world would change until we all ate this way all the time. When I see the Ceres Project and the impact it has on individuals, I dream of the slow impact it is having on the world. I wish every community could have a Ceres.

The last patient I referred to Ceres was a young woman in the midst of a 24 week treatment for Hepatitis C. She was losing hair, severely fatigued, depressed, and most dangerously, her white blood cell counts were dropping to the point where she would need hospitalization. But then something miraculous happened. She started to receive food and extras from Ceres. She started to feel better and I was amazed when her labs showed a normalization of her white blood cell count! In the eight years that I have been treating Hepatitis C, I’d never seen such a dramatic improvement. Thank you, Ceres. My patient is now cured of her Hepatitis C and I bet we wouldn’t have made it through without your support.
Why Ceres?

Ceres’ work engages the whole community, building bonds of caring connection that help make all of us healthier and more whole. Volunteers are the heart of Ceres Community Project, and we couldn’t do our work without them. Our adult volunteers play dozens of vital roles week in and week out, from mentoring teens in our kitchens and garden, to supporting our clients as Client Liaisons and Delivery Angels. And while we’re incredibly grateful to our volunteers, they often assure us they feel they “get” more than they give from the experience.

Our Nourishing Connections Cookbook and Educational Programs help us reach thousands of people throughout our community and across the country with the information and inspiration they need to change their eating habits and improve their health. Ceres’ daily Teen Circles; our Healing Foods Basics class, offered regularly at our Sebastopol site; and the Nutrition for Wellness class we offer every other week at West County Health Center’s Forestville Wellness Clinic, reached 850 people during 2013.

As interest in our model has spread across the country we’ve created training and support programs to aid new communities in successfully replicating our model. In each of these communities, Ceres’ message about the relationship between food, connection and health has reached thousands more teens and adults.

Community Building & Education

Morgan Hewitt
Sebastopol Volunteer Client Liaison

I am humbled and honored to serve our clients. It makes me appreciate the very precious nature of life and strive to live fully each day.

I met a client who has two different forms of cancer—both stage 4. He is of very modest means and is extremely bright. He loved the Ceres food and the flowers, cards and thoughtfulness that was conveyed in every food delivery. Our conversations each week were deep and thought provoking. His tumors shrank and his health improved. He has studied nutrition and continues to learn more throughout his illness. He taught me a lot about courage and the tender aspects of accepting help. We have to let go of the medical model that says we are successful only when there is a cure. The quality of both this man’s life and mine improved through our Ceres friendship.
Kellie Noe
Board Member

Ceres Community Project has created one of the richest youth development programs that I’ve seen. As someone with over 10 years of experience in the youth development field both locally and nationally and as a school board member, I know first-hand the long-term difference this program is making – not only for the young people involved but for our whole community. This is a program that needs to be scaled both here in Sonoma and across the country.
In-kind Donors

We are deeply grateful to all of our Community Partners whose contributions to Ceres make our work possible. In 2013 we received nearly $200,000 in in-kind donations from dozens of farmers, food producers, grocers and others. Here are just a few examples of how some of Ceres’ Community Partners are making a difference for our teens and clients.

Gourmet Mushrooms
Along with cash support, this local business has donated nutrient-rich organic mushrooms like Trumpet Royales and Maitakes weekly, as well as the mushroom powders we use in our Ceres “Extras”, since 2008.

Oliver’s Market
Since 2008, Oliver’s Markets has given Ceres half off all of our organic poultry and sustainably-caught seafood, saving us more than $13,000 in 2013 alone.

Sonoma Design
These partners put smiles on our teen volunteers’ faces with the beautiful embroidery they donate for the personalized aprons teens receive after 6 months, and the embroidered chefs’ coats our Teen Leaders wear. The owner’s son is one of our past Teen Chefs.

Redwood Hill Farm
Redwood Hill donates all the Goat Milk Kefir we offer to clients each week – more than 2,000 bottles annually – plus cheeses for our entrees and events, and has done so since 2008.

Colin Davidson
Store Team Leader
Sebastopol Whole Foods Market

Two and a half years ago, Colin and Chris Maritzen, the Sebastopol Deli Team Leader at the time, came up with a truly innovative idea – let’s sell salads made from some of Ceres Community Project’s recipes and donate a part of each sale back to them. A year later the idea scaled to all nine stores in Marin and Sonoma and now generates more than $30,000 annually for Ceres – enough to provide three months of meals to 58 of our clients.

At Whole Foods Market we work to be more than a grocery store. It’s in our core values to give back to the communities that support us. That’s why we’re so proud to partner with Ceres Community Project to help people battle the toughest illnesses, educate our youth on cooking and nutrition, and ultimately build a culture of healing and wellness in our communities and beyond.
Daniel Kedan
Chef/Owner, Backyard Restaurant

Chef Daniel Kedan's Backyard Restaurant in Forestville features meals completely in line with Ceres' food philosophy – locally raised, whole foods, and made with love. Daniel and his partner Marianna have become huge Ceres supporters. In 2013 Daniel donated his time and food for our Leadership Donor Appreciation event and again at Harvest of the Heart, our signature fundraising event. In November he and Marianna offered Backyard for a benefit with Ceres' Executive Chef and our teens partnering to create an amazing meal that raised more than $2,500 for our work. They’ve also become a training ground for Ceres' teens interested in culinary careers, with two of our teens working at the restaurant.

This is an organization that we are grateful to be associated with. Watching Rob and the teen volunteers make meals filled with life and love is one of the most inspiring actions I have ever seen. Thank you Ceres for all that you do.
Where Does The Money Come From?
TOTAL $1,451,780
- Individual $412,059 · 28%
- Foundation $278,766 · 19%
- Corporate $140,182 · 10%
- Government $117,838 · 8%
- In-kind $199,196 · 14%
- Program Income $124,341 · 9%
- Events $179,398 · 12%

Where Does The Money Go?
TOTAL $1,286,151
- Healing Meals Program $817,261 · 64%
  - $713,140 · Sebastopol
  - $83,254 · Marin
  - $20,867 · Sonoma Valley
- Fund-Raising $185,414 · 14%
- General & Administration $158,894 · 12%
- Community Outreach & Education $83,254 · 7%
- National Affiliate Program $41,328 · 3%

Growth In Meal Volume
TOTAL MEALS 223,245
- 2007 4,500
- 2008 17,300
- 2009 21,900
- 2010 26,100
- 2011 31,750
- 2012 48,886
- 2013 72,809
- Sebastopol 59,859
- Marin 9,160
- Sonoma Valley 3,200

Growth In Organizational Revenues
- 2007 $13,500
- 2008 $77,000
- 2009 $179,000
- 2010 $429,532
- 2011 $506,058
- 2012 $774,503

Leveraging Cash Donations
TOTAL $2,156,973
- Total Cash $1,252,584 · 58%
- Total In-Kind $904,389 · 42%

According to our surveys, the clients and teen volunteers who participated in Ceres’ programs in 2013 will consume 4,530,745 additional servings of fruits and vegetables over the next 10 years thanks to what they learned during their time with us.

**Ceres Foods are the Answer**

According to the Harvard School of Public Health, “The same healthful food choices and diet patterns that help prevent heart disease, diabetes, and other chronic conditions may also help to prevent weight gain.” They recommend the very same foods that we prepare for our clients—whole grains, vegetables, fruits, nuts, healthful sources of protein (fish, poultry, beans), and plant oils.

**Small Changes Can Make a Very Big Difference**

If all Californians reduced our body mass index by just 5% (10 pounds for a 200 pound person) Robert Wood Johnson Foundation estimates we could prevent 796,000 cases of type 2 diabetes, 657,000 cases of heart disease and stroke, and 53,000 cases of cancer in California over the next 10 years—and save $87 billion dollars in health care costs.

**Cooking Keeps You Healthy**

According to the journal *Public Health Nutrition*, seniors who cooked five times a week or more were 47% more likely to be alive ten years later. Lead author Professor Mark Wahlqvist summed up the study findings by saying, “The pathways to health that food provides are not limited to its nutrients or components, but extend to each step in the food chain, from its production, to purchase, preparation and eating, especially with others.”

**Being Engaged in Meaningful Ways is Healing**

According to Chris Crowley and Henry S. Loge, MD, “Hundreds of research studies confirm that . . . connection heals us through the same physical mechanisms as exercise and healthy diet. Blood vessels are measurably more elastic, the heart’s ability to respond to extraordinary demands is higher, cardiac inflammatory protein levels are lower, and blood pressure response to exercise is better in more connected people. Their stress-hormone blood profiles are also measurably healthier than those of isolated people.” [From the book *Why Love Heals*]
On the cover is Ceres’ first Teen Garden Leader Maria Walker working in the Ceres Community Garden, the 2013 source of thousands of pounds of teen-grown organic produce to nourish our clients’ bodies, and 1,456 bouquets of flowers to brighten their spirits.