

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE &
FOOD SYSTEMS FUNDERS



2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

BUILDING
FOR THE
FUTURE



OUR VALUES

COLLABORATION

The action of working with someone to produce or create something

EQUITY

Fairness and justice in the way people are treated

RESPECT

To hold in esteem or honor

STEWARDSHIP

The responsible overseeing and protection of something considered worth caring for and preserving

INTEGRITY

The state of being whole and undivided

OUR VISION

Our vision is that all resources invested in food and agriculture systems enhance our collective well-being.

OUR MISSION

We amplify the impact of philanthropic and investment communities in support of just and sustainable food and agriculture systems.



“We could never have imagined last year exactly how critical the internal infrastructure we were working to strengthen would become as 2020 turned into a year literally like no other.”

As you are reading the 2019 Year In Review, you are probably thinking—that seems like another time, and another world. We were last together at our 17th annual SAFSF Forum in Pittsburgh. Looking back on our gathering in Pittsburgh now, we wonder when we will be able to meet and talk and laugh face-to-face again, in such a large and vibrant convening.

We could never have imagined last year exactly how critical the internal infrastructure we were working to strengthen would become as 2020 turned into a year literally like no other. 2019 was an excellent year for SAFSF. We became an independent 501c3 organization and expanded our staff, both of which allowed us to continue to advance important work for the future of SAFSF. We began deeper conversations among staff and board about how to further articulate and live into our longstanding commitment to equity as a core value. We completed a comprehensive audit of our communications activity and potential, all while maintaining a full schedule of programs and activities for funders.

The publication of this 2019 Year In Review will go out only in electronic format, as most of us are currently working somewhere other than our organizational offices due to pandemic relocations. However, the work we do absolutely must go on—we have all seen that it is more critical than ever. And it's just as critical for us to look back and reflect on how we as a community of funders and activists have arrived at this place where we can have such a significant collective impact on the world in which we live.

So please take a few minutes to scroll through this Year In Review report. These few pages will give you a brief but better understanding of how much analysis, input, planning and execution goes into the events and activities that you experience from SAFSF. We hope the photos of some of the fun we had together last year, in meeting rooms, on farms, in buses, will also bring you a smile and hope for our continued work together.

We will be back together again, in person, and we look forward to seeing your faces and hearing your stories. Until then, stay committed to the great work that you are doing as we stay committed to connecting and supporting this strong network of funders.

Virginia Clarke
Executive Director
SAFSF

Jennifer Zuckerman
Director of Strategic Initiatives
World Food Policy Center, Duke University
Chair, SAFSF Board of Directors

LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVE

MEMBERS LEAD THE WAY

Member volunteers set our strategic direction and ensure that every one of our programs and activities bring value to funders' work.



SAFSF Board of Directors and staff at the annual planning retreat at the offices of Grace Communications Foundation in New York, January 2019.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Stacey Barbas
The Kresge Foundation

Linda Jo Doctor
W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Ila Duncan²
The Lumpkin Family Foundation

Erin Eisenberg¹
TomKat Foundation

Kathleen Fluegel
HRK Foundation

Kaying Hang²
Sierra Health Foundation

Leslie Hatfield
GRACE Communications Foundation

Brad Leibov (Vice Chair/Secretary)
EarthShare (formerly with Liberty Prairie Foundation)

Jaime Love¹
Interact for Health

Carol Pickering
Dietel & Partners

Michael Roberts (Treasurer)
First Nations Development Institute

Mikki Sager²
The Conservation Fund

Jen Zuckerman (Chair)
World Food Policy Center

Membership

Andrea Bretting
Claneil Foundation

Kathleen Fluegel
HRK Foundation

Christine James
The John Merck Fund

Andrew Kang Bartlett
Presbyterian Hunger Program

Chair - Linda Jo Doctor
W.K. Kellogg Foundation

2019 Forum Planning

Andrea Bretting
Claneil Foundation

Joan Briggs
Threshold Foundation

Alison Cohen
WhyHunger

Tamela Luce
HealthSpark Foundation

Andrew McElwaine
The Heinz Endowments

Jenny Nielsen
Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania

Steve Saltzman
Self-Help Credit Union & Affiliates

Megan Saynisch
GRACE Communications Foundation

Chair - Jen Zuckerman
World Food Policy Center, Duke University

Resource

Scott Cullen
GRACE Communications Foundation

Mark Muller
McKnight Foundation

Chair - Erin Eisenberg
TomKat Foundation

2020 Forum Planning

J. Olu Baiyewu
Food Well Alliance

Alyssa Banks
Greater Twin Cities United Way

Ila Duncan
The Lumpkin Family Foundation

Devin Foote
W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Christine James
The John Merck Fund

Bob Scowcroft
The Nell Newman Foundation, Inc.

Elizabeth Stewart Burger
The Sunflower Foundation

Jeff Usher
Kansas Health Foundation

Gwen Wurst
Greater Kansas City Community Foundation

Chair - Leslie Hatfield
GRACE Communications Foundation

Strategy

Tim Crosby
Thread Fund

Jonathan Halperin
Marcus Foundation

Tamela Luce
HealthSpark Foundation

Mailee Walker
Claneil Foundation

Chair - Carol Pickering
Dietel & Partners

Policy

A-dae Romero-Briones
First Nations Development Institute

Ila Duncan
The Lumpkin Family Foundation

Noah Fulmer
Fair Food Network

Kaying Hang
Sierra Health Foundation

Jaime Love
Institute for Sustainable Communities

Bryan Crawford-Garrett
Thornburg Foundation

Paul Wolfe
Walton Family Foundation

Chair - Stacey Barbas
The Kresge Foundation

2019 COMMITTEES

CONVENING AND CONNECTING

SAFSF continued to excel in bringing funders together in partnership with those doing the work on the ground, to learn and strategize solutions.

Policy Learning & Engagement

The April 2019 Farm Bill Implementation Briefing in Washington, DC brought funders up-to-speed on important provisions of the 2018 Farm Bill, while highlighting strategies for funder engagement with USDA during the rulemaking process, an allowable activity that does not constitute lobbying.

This engagement led to officials from USDA hosting a policy session at the 2019 SAFSF Forum in Pittsburgh to get funder input as they structured the rollout of USDA's new Regional Food Systems Partnership grants.



Connections in the Field

SAFSF staff and board hosted or participated in meetings of both member and nonmember food funders in New York, Boston, and Denver.

SAFSF staff participated in policy conferences including the United Philanthropy Forum's Foundations on the Hill and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities' 2019 Impact Conference, as well as annual convenings of other philanthropy serving organizations including Confluence Philanthropy, Grantmakers in Health, United Philanthropy Forum, Environmental Grantmakers Association, and Change Philanthropy.



Engaging Public Partners

Our ongoing partnership with the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) included several meetings in 2019 at both the regional and national levels. SAFSF also worked with partners at NESAWG to publish the second version of *Success Stories From the Field*, highlighting the importance of federal and state funding to sustainable agriculture for distribution at the NEASDA (North East) conference and worked with funders in New Mexico to publish a Western version for the NASDA national conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Pittsburgh, PA
June 18-20, 2019

Points of Convergence

SAFSF 17th Annual Forum



2019 SAFSF
FORUM

82%

connected with a peer
for information or
advice

43%

connected with
government officials
or policymakers

97%

connected with other
funders

62%

connected with NGOs
or other nonprofit
organizations

Results from 2019 Forum attendee feedback survey.

IMPACT THROUGH PROGRAMMING

Our organizational changes spurred a deep analysis of program offerings and a more holistic approach to program planning across our members' many interest areas.

Program Analysis

Our comprehensive 2019 program review looked at how our program topics correlated with feedback from surveys and member input. This helped illuminate the intersectionality of our programming, while also pointing out a few areas needing more attention.

Webinars

SAFSF webinars reached the funding community on a broad range of topics, from our three-part soil health series, to flooding in the Midwest and offshore aquaculture issues; from the potential effects of the Census and public charge rules on immigration, to reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act.

PROGRAM
TOPIC AREAS

25 Agricultural Products

27 Environmental Sustainability

24 Farms & Farming Systems

35 Justice

31 Health

33 Markets

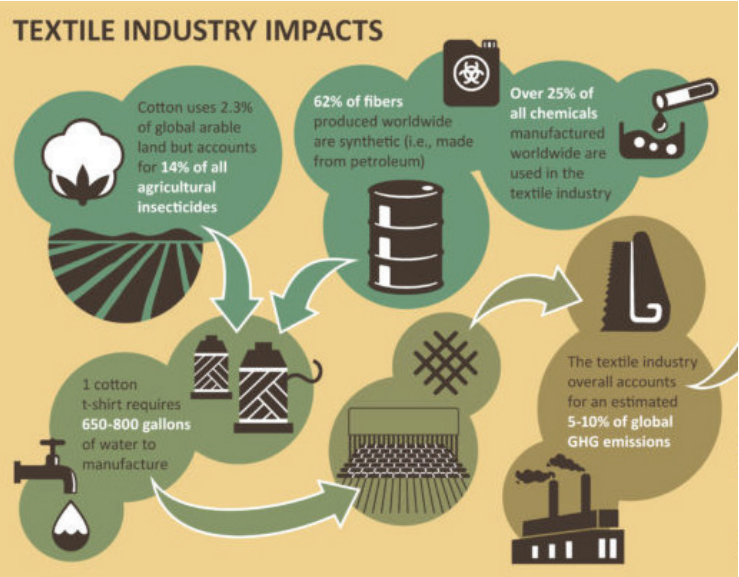
The number of programs (webinars, workshops, dinners, etc.) that touched on these topic areas.

New Initiatives

Member feedback helped to shape two pilot learning and action cohorts for funders to deeply explore the topics of impact investing and funding in Indian Country, both of which will launch in 2020. We also hosted a research project on strategic funding opportunities in sustainable textiles, which grew out of several years of SAFSF programming on the topic. The report is due out in 2020.

Member Programs

Member-only programming focused on our "In the Kitchen" calls, which moved to video in 2019, letting members from around the country virtually meet and get to know each other. Members shared their own experiences around topics such as participatory grantmaking and spend-down strategies.



INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

Intentional investments in organizational capacity in 2019 positioned SAFSF for future growth and expansion of member services.

Organizational Status

In 2019, SAFSF graduated from 16 years of fiscal sponsorship, to incorporate and become a 501c3 nonprofit, with a fiduciary Board of Directors taking the place of the previous Steering Committee. This move gave SAFSF greater control over its own finances and reporting, and the ability to pursue a wider range of business activities to ensure the organization's future financial health.

Communications

An in-depth communications audit yielded recommendations for improving our outreach to members and nonmembers, and for developing our capacity to amplify our members' voices on the issues affecting sustainable agriculture and food systems philanthropy. Based on the audit, we began an overhaul of our website and visual identity to bring greater value to members and recognition to the SAFSF community of funders.

KEY INSIGHTS
MEMBER SURVEY

Insights gleaned from our 2018 Member Survey guided the development of our Key Informant Interviews in 2019, the second phase of our three-year evaluation cycle.

- programming adds membership value
- members' participation impacts perception
- connections formed at SAFSF lead to collaboration
- education influences action

Equity Learning

Some staff participated in Food Solutions New England's 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge in mid-2019 and our full staff took the Organizational Equity Assessment offered by United Philanthropy Forum in late 2019. These activities along with equity discussions at the Board Strategy Retreat in October led to inclusion of more intentional and intensive equity engagement in our 2020 budget and workplan.



Staff Expansion

Executive Director **Virginia Clarke** tapped into her unparalleled network of peers and colleagues across philanthropy serving organizations for best practices to smoothly guide the complicated organizational transition to success. To oversee the finance and operations functions that now reside in-house, **Bridget Dobrowski** stepped into the new role of Managing Director. **Susie DiMauro** and **Abbie Nissenon** became Program Directors, and **Stacy Nwokochah** became Operations and Management Associate.

Traci Bruckner joined the staff in late 2018 as Policy Program Director, while **Wendy Sosa** and **Renee Catacalos** joined in early 2019 as Program Associate and Member and Strategic Partnerships Director, respectively. Traci and Renee are 100% remote employees. The goal was to provide expanded geographic perspective and in-person meeting coverage, but dedicated remote hiring also unexpectedly put SAFSF ahead of the online productivity curve, which has become of paramount importance.

2019
FINANCIALS

Unofficial financials

January 1 – December 31, 2019

SAFSF completed the spinout from our fiscal sponsor in May 2019. Therefore, our official 990 for 2019 reflects only the latter half of the year, while financials for the first part of the year were reported by New Venture Fund. The financials presented here represent the combined funds that were managed through both organizations, giving a complete picture of our financial performance for the year.

P&L STATEMENT

REVENUE	\$1,499,301
EXPENSES.....	\$1,405,334
NET INCOME	\$93,967

BALANCE SHEET

BEGINNING ASSETS.....	\$642,092
ENDING ASSETS	\$872,569

2019
BY THE NUMBERS

more than
\$211M in members' food & ag funding
 **97** members

THE ONLY NATIONAL AFFINITY GROUP SERVING
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS FUNDERS

395 program participants  email outreach to **1200+** individuals  **260** Forum attendees

23+ education & policy webinars **38** volunteer leaders **8** staff



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Sustainable Agriculture
& Food Systems Funders

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GATHER
WITH US

FALL 2020 POLICY
OUTLOOK AND
FUNDER STRATEGY
SERIES

2021 FORUM
Washington, DC

LADYWITHAFAN *design*

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