

# DONOR *report*

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Together we can solve hunger™



## Farm Food Collaborative Boosts Healthy Food Access and Keeps Food Dollars Local

North Alabama has a proud and storied history of agriculture. However, driving across the state and seeing field after field of farmland, it's easy to overlook the fact that our tradition of family farming is endangered. We've lost over 2,000 North Alabama farms in the past five years. It's estimated that over 90% of the money spent on food in North Alabama goes to growers outside the region, often across—or even outside—the country. This has greatly harmed the ability of local farmers to support their families.

But things are changing, thanks to you and the Food Bank of North Alabama. In addition to feeding residents at risk of hunger, the Food Bank is working to make fresh, healthy, and local fruits and vegetables available to public school children across our region. The Farm Food Collaborative, a grant-supported initiative of the Food Bank of North Alabama, connects local farmers to local schools. These kinds of farm-to-school relationships increase students' access to healthy food while helping them know where their food came from and who in their community grew it.

In one of the initiative's greatest success stories, the Collaborative helped fifth generation farmer, Will Scott of Scott's Orchards, sell locally grown apples into every public school in the state of Alabama! Plus, he and his family are delivering apples to Madison County and Madison City Schools through the entire fall season. Their apples are picked fresh from trees and delivered directly to these schools in a matter of days, rather than being stored for months and then trucked across the country. Will says, "The Food Bank's Farm Food Collaborative has helped to make connections [with schools] and maintain those connections. The Collaborative and the Food Bank have been true

friends to Alabama farmers. It feels great to know that North Alabama school kids are literally benefiting from the fruits of my family's 114-year tradition."

The benefit is mutual. Will and his family have been so appreciative of the Food Bank's effort to connect them to schools that they are giving back. They have donated thousands of pounds of fresh apples for backpack programs and other child hunger relief efforts that help get fresh, local, healthy food to children when school meals aren't available. Partnerships like these offer innovative solutions to the problem of hunger in our region. They have helped us close the gap between the farm and the plate that so many struggling families face. And your support makes it all possible! Thank you!



*Will Scott, local fifth generation farmer*

**To find out more about hunger and the Farm Food Collaborative please visit [www.foodbanknorthal.org](http://www.foodbanknorthal.org)**