



FOOD BANK OF  
NORTH ALABAMA

# Impact

Together we can solve hunger™

VOLUME 15 | FALL | 2020

## The Farm Food Collaboration: Whited Farms

Wade Whited is a third-generation farmer, who runs Whited Farms in Oneonta. He's worked with the Food Bank of North Alabama's Farm Food Collaborative program going on six years now.

**The Farm Food Collaborative is North Alabama's first local food hub and has been operating since 2014. The mission of the FFC is to build a robust local food system, and this is done partially by supporting local, thriving family farms. FFC helps farmers obtain food safety certifications and coordinate sales and delivery logistics so farms throughout North and Central Alabama can sell to school districts, early care and education sites, grocery stores and restaurants.**

"They've opened up a lot more opportunities for us," Whited said of the FFC. "You have to have help in selling, and some places they get our food into, I never would have thought to sell to. It has been a huge help."

**With the help of generous donors, the Food Bank is purchasing boxes of produce from Whited Farms to provide fresh, locally grown produce to people in need during the pandemic.**

Whited said he's enlisted the help of his wife and her sister to help fill the boxes with onions, squash, cucumbers, zucchini, tomatoes, eggplant and even some fruit, such as bananas, that he's purchased to help with the variety.

>> *continued on page 2*



We're getting ***fresh, local produce*** to those in need ... ***because of donors like you!***

# The Farm Food Collaboration: Whited Farms

>> *continued from page 1*

"It's staples, stuff everybody eats, I'm sure," Whited said. "I know with this virus, a lot of people are really hurting. It helps me, and it helps the people who can't help themselves right now."

Carey Martin-Lane, co-manager of the Farm Food Collaborative, said that the Food Bank purchasing these boxes helps more than the farmer and the recipient by having a multiplying effect for our economy.

For every dollar you spend in your local economy, Martin-Lane said, its impact can be valued between \$1.60 and \$1.80 depending on the number of times it is circulated within your community.

**"So when you buy \$10 worth of peaches from a local farmer, it actually brings \$16-\$18 into your community," she said. "Instead of sending those dollars to other states and countries, you are investing in your community's ability to support itself, now and in the future."**

FFC Co-manager, Natalie Bishnoi, adds, "The phrase 'no farms — no food' is especially relevant right now. One of the many things COVID-19 has shown us is that our global food supply chain has gaps and limitations. Local purchasing allows us to strengthen the links in the food supply chain that are closest to us, and those are the ones we rely on in times of crisis. This year, many of us are recognizing that

Alabama farmers are here for us. When we purchase from local farms, we communicate that we're here for them too."

Nutritionally, locally grown food has an impact on those receiving these boxes as well.

When large farms select seeds, durability is the main deciding factor. But smaller farmers whose product is only travelling as far as say Oneonta to Huntsville — not travelling internationally — they can choose varieties with superior nutritional value and not to mention flavor.

**"Food is about more than calories," Martin-Lane said. "It's about having enough nutrition for the energy you need, and it's about sharing moments with those you love. One of my greatest joys this summer has been sharing fresh fruits and vegetables with our 9-month-old, both from local farms and our own garden. You can almost taste the Alabama sunshine and with every bite, I think of gardening with my grandparents and how excited I am to pass that down to the next generation. I feel honored that my work helps provide fresh local food to more people, something everyone should have access to."**



**Whited Farms**  
Oneonta, AL

*"Farming is in my blood. I just love to watch things grow. And when they yield good, it's a pretty thing."*

**Wade Whited**  
3rd generation farmer

*Farm Food*  
Collaborative

NORTH ALABAMA'S FIRST LOCAL FOOD HUB

Sweet Grown Alabama

Instagram Twitter @FoodHubAL

Because of donors like you ... *amazing things are happening!*