



# 2023 IMPACT REPORT



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



*Dear Supporters and Friends of Peoria Grown,*

As we continue our journey into our sixth year at Peoria Grown, we can look back at 2023 as a time of exciting new opportunities and some unprecedented challenges. While we prefer to deal with the opportunities, we understand that programs will encounter obstacles. It has always been integral to our model that we acknowledge the need for change and maintain flexibility, so we can pivot when necessary.

One of our core programs, **Market 309**, was previously hosted at the Peoria Women's Club but encountered financial pressures due to rising food costs. Consequently, we made the difficult decision to consolidate our locations, closing the Peoria Women's Club site in June 2023. This strategic decision ensures sustainability while optimizing resources for a more significant impact elsewhere, reflecting our commitment to maximizing community benefit within our means. Our two locations are **Market 309** at Trewyn Park and **Market 309 at Bradley University**. Both locations continue to experience significant growth. These thriving hubs signify our ongoing dedication to providing accessible fresh produce while adapting to evolving needs.

The subsidized market model for **Market 309** was developed with feedback from community members. It provides a pathway for families to transition out of the emergency food system and become empowered to be more self-reliant. Presently, there are few options for families to take ownership of their health, and **Market 309** endeavors to fill this critical gap by fostering self-sufficiency.

Our **fruit stand program**, spanning eight locations across community centers and schools, was pivotal in promoting access to free, fresh produce, instead of encouraging children to spend money on unhealthy, processed snacks. In 2023, we provided over 60,000 servings of fruit to school children. Regrettably, we paused operations in February 2024 due to the same

pressures experienced by our markets. We continue to seek funding to restart the program, and its legacy endures in the healthy eating habits it encouraged in our young people.

Among Peoria Grown's most impactful endeavors are our **nutrition classes**, which have experienced a surge in demand over the past five years. Hiring a part-time dietician in 2023 has helped us reach over 500 young people and adults through Peoria Grown classes. Through these educational sessions, we have witnessed a tangible increase in nutritional awareness among participating children, as evidenced by the results of our pre and post-surveys, underscoring the power of informed choices in shaping long-term health outcomes.

In 2023, Peoria Grown continued to hit new milestones in our core programs. These achievements demonstrate our dedication and the resilience of our community. Our success in providing workable solutions to nutrition insecurity issues inspire us to forge ahead, be confident in our ability to make a meaningful difference and explore innovative ways to address the nutritional needs of our community.

I would like to thank our board for their steadfast support and guidance as we continue to work on finding solutions to address the barriers to nutrition insecurity. To our dedicated volunteers, whose tireless efforts sustain our programs week after week, thank you for your unwavering commitment to our city and community. And to all our program participants, partners, and shoppers of Market 309, your steadfast patronage, collaboration, kind words, and encouragement are the fuel that propels us forward. We sincerely appreciate your continued support.

*With sincere gratitude,*

**JULIE ELIATHAMBY,  
FOUNDER**



Market 309 has become the only way I can access fruits and vegetables.

-Vivian

“I’ve had more fruits and vegetables since coming here. It makes such a difference. I got that good broccoli last time.”

-Donna

# 2023 FAST STATS

20%

**INCREASE** in total customers at Market 309 compared to 2022.

60,000

servings of fruits **PROVIDED** in Peoria Fruit Stands for 2023.

29%

**INCREASE** in sales at Market 309 compared to 2022.

178%

**INCREASE** in students for the nutrition education classes compared to 2022.





“As a retired person without steady income, the market helps a lot.”

-Lucio



“...constructive for the community. Good for the city.”

-John

# MARKET 309

Market 309 is a subsidized market that offers fresh produce at a convenient location and at a cost cheaper than grocery stores.

The market provides individuals and families access to healthy food to individuals and families in Peoria's 61603, 61604, and 61605 zip codes as well as anyone with a Link/EBT card, senior citizens, veterans, and individuals with disabilities.

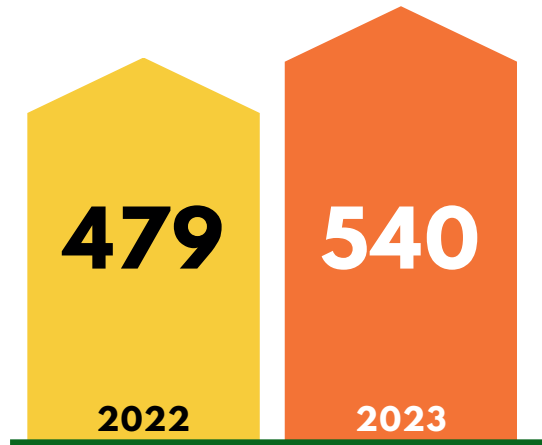
The market is open to Peoria residents on Sunday from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm and to Bradley University students on Fridays from 3:00 to 5:00 pm.

Market 309 had a record-setting year. We were able to reach more customers, even though we were open 11 less days compared to 2022. Our families were able to stretch their dollars even more in 2023 as demonstrated by increased SNAP sales, Link voucher, and punch card redemption.

**"Market 309's subsidized model is a necessary structure for our customers but poses operational challenges."**

**2023 brought up some difficult choices. The downtown market location had to be closed due to increased food prices. In 2023, food prices increased so significantly that we saw a loss of about 60% every week in revenue compared to 45% in 2022. Market 309's subsidized model is a necessary structure for our customers but poses operational challenges.**

# MARKET 309 DATA



**Returning Customers**

**Average Sale: \$ 11.96**

**Other zip codes/areas**

16%

61603  
14%



61605  
45%

61604  
25%

**98%**

**of our  
customers  
live within  
the Peoria  
County zip  
codes.**

Outside of the above noted zip codes, Market 309 is open to LINK card holders, Senior citizens (ages 65 and above), Veterans, LGBTQ+, and people with disabilities.



# MARKET 309 DATA



## IN 2023\*:

**TOTAL  
CUSTOMERS**



**↑ 20%**

150% INCREASE compared to 2021

**GENERAL  
SALES**



**↑ 29%**

190% INCREASE compared to 2021

**LINK/SNAP  
SALES**



**↑ 17%**

120% INCREASE compared to 2021

**LINK VOUCHER  
REDEMPTION**



**↑ 148%**

**PUNCH CARD  
USE**



**↑ 28%**

\*These values are compared to 2022 data.

## LOCATIONS INCLUDE:

Manual High School

Neighborhood House

Lincoln Grade School

Community House

Proctor Recreation Center

Friendship House

Southside Community Center

Dream Center

# FRUIT STANDS

Our Fruit Stand Program makes a difference in our community by providing **FREE** weekly fruits to schools and community centers. We believe that everyone deserves access to fresh, nutritious snacks. We operated eight fruit stands across the community, strategically located for easy access.

“We would like to again thank Peoria Grown for providing our school with nutritious options for the past 2 years!! Our fruit stand is a popular place in the building!! #RAMILY”

**-Peoria Manual Rams Football**

# 60,000

servings of fruits PROVIDED in Peoria Fruit Stands for 2023.





# NUTRITION EDUCATION

Our nutrition education classes help introduce new foods to our participants, such as fruits and vegetables from around the world. We believe education is the key to helping individuals be self-sufficient and improve community wellness.

These classes are led by Registered Dietitians to teach healthy cooking techniques and inspire healthy grocery selections. Participants learn how cooking can prevent and control many diseases. After each class, participants go home with recipes and a bag full of fresh groceries to make healthy meals at home.

**In 2023, we saw our highest delivery of nutrition education classes.**

**"Hiring a part-time dietitian made reaching so many more students possible."**

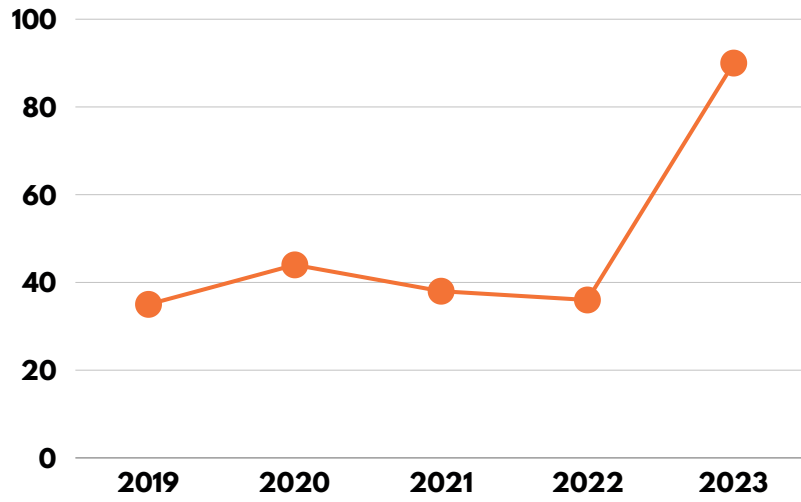
Funding for this role was made possible through NRPA's "Community Wellness Hubs" grant. Our dietitian worked with over 500 kids and adults to teach healthy eating habits and basic cooking skills.



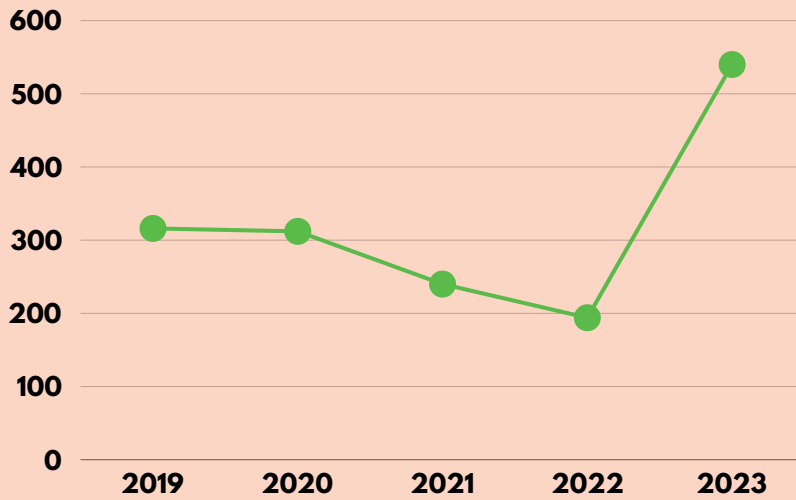
"The little one asks me, 'Did you get me the strawberries?'"

**-Angela**





**Number of classes done (by year)**



**Number of students attending nutrition classes (by year)**



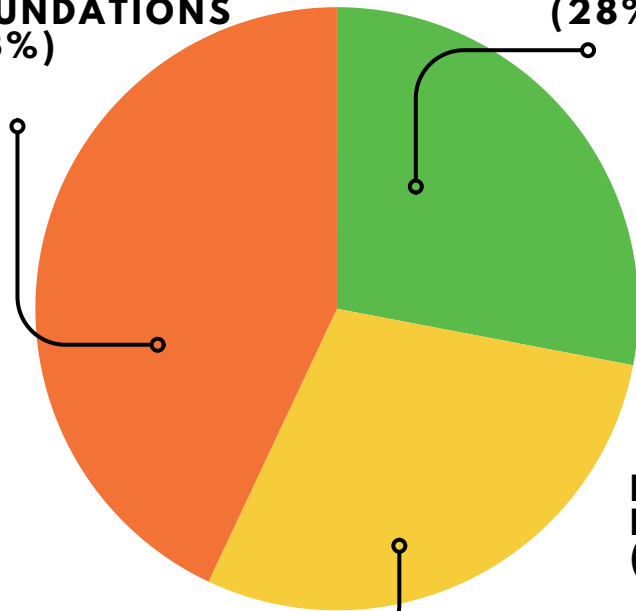


# FUNDING SOURCES & USE



**PRIVATE DONATIONS & CHARITABLE FOUNDATIONS (43%)**

**MARKET 309 REVENUE (28%)**



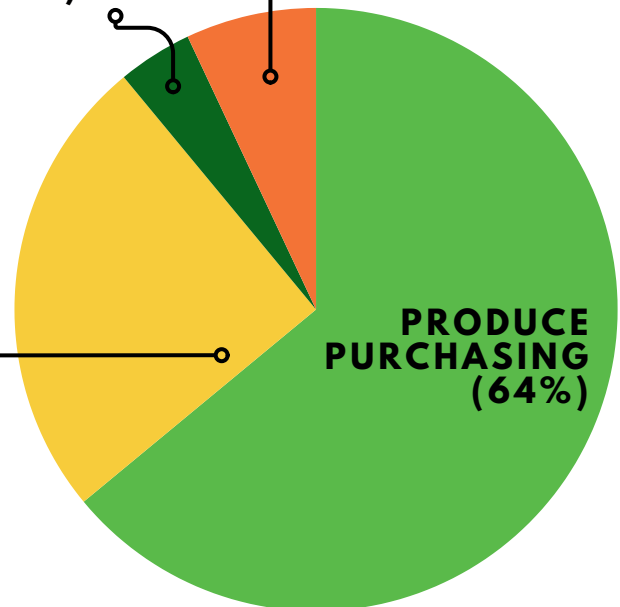
**GRANTS (29%)**

**DIETITIAN PAYROLL (4%)**

**OPERATIONAL EXPENSES (7%)**

**NUTRITION EDUCATION CLASSES (25%)**

**PRODUCE PURCHASING (64%)**





Market 309 has helped us in so many ways, to its beautiful produce and vegetables, to the beautiful souls that volunteer, donate, and give back to the community! The experience is beautiful, soulful, and welcoming! The produce is always fresh, great! And the prices!!!! You can not beat the prices! Such a great way to give back to the community! We support this fully 100% and will continue to go, and give back as best as we can! Thank you so much!

**-Michael**

“Peoria Grown Market brings relief to countless people with disabilities living in food deserts.

For them, accessing fresh, affordable produce can be a daily hurdle. But the market steps in, offering a welcoming space filled with high-quality fruits and vegetables at prices that fit tight budgets.

This isn't just about groceries, it's about empowerment.

Individuals with disabilities can shop independently, choose nutritious options, and enjoy the same access to healthy food as everyone else.

For families with children, the market becomes a source of joy, knowing their plates can be filled with fresh, vibrant produce, fostering healthy habits and happy mealtimes. The market doesn't stop at the bounty of its stalls. It's a hub for community, offering a platform for local leaders to share their knowledge and inspire us.

The chair yoga classes provide gentle movement for all abilities, while educational workshops equip us with valuable skills for healthy living. This holistic approach nourishes not only our bodies with fresh food, but also our minds and spirits with a sense of belonging and connection.

The Peoria Grown Market is more than just a market, it's a lifeline, weaving together access, education, and community.”

**-Kadedra**