

Food Justice: Supporting Local farmers of Color While Bringing Equitable Access to Fresh Produce in Marginalized Communities via Certified Farmers Market

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Writing Sample

Proposal Summary: [REDACTED] is a BIPOC-led organization dedicated to promoting sustainable agriculture and food justice. We're committed to educating people about soil health and organic farming through our Pollinator Sanctuary and Food Farm, and are proud to launch our certified farmers market this May, which will play a critical role in addressing food insecurity and environmental justice issues in the Bayview district of San Francisco. Our market will empower local Farmers of Color, while providing affordable and nutritious produce to low-income communities. We are seeking \$15,000 to ensure our services remain accessible and sustainable, and to create a racial diversity fund to support struggling farmers. Our work is grounded in the principles of equity, social justice, and community empowerment, making a meaningful difference in people's lives.

Who we are and what we do:

At [REDACTED] we strive to break down barriers to health equity in marginalized communities by addressing issues such as environmental injustice, broken food systems, and contaminated soil—empowering the voices of those most impacted, while restoring habitats for local insect, animal, and plant kin.

Through our Pollinator Sanctuary and Food Farm, we provide education on soil health, organic farming, and the importance of habitat protection and restoration. Through our certified farmers market at the Southeast Community Center, launching this May, we seek to address food insecurity and environmental justice issues in the disadvantaged communities of San Francisco’s Bayview Hunters Point district (District 10). Our farmers market will showcase BIPOC food producers, artists, and musicians, fostering a sense of community connection, while increasing equitable access to fresh, healthy produce for Bayview residents (who face limited access), working towards transformative food and farm systems change, and creating a platform to promote environmental sustainability.

Total Project Budget:

\$144,105

Funding need:

\$15,000

How this funding will transform our work in sustainable agriculture and food justice:

Your support will help ensure that our services are accessible and sustainable, while prioritizing the needs of low-income Communities of Color. Ours will be the first certified farmers market in the district, providing affordable, nutritious produce to over 78,000 residents of the Bayview district who may otherwise lack access, including for those who receive SNAP benefits. Of all Supervisorial districts, according to the San Francisco Department of Health Food Security Task Force, District 10 has the lowest median income per capita, the 2nd highest number of residents served by pantries, and the highest number of individuals receiving food stamps.

Bayview has been known as a food desert and has historically suffered from a lack of investment compared to other parts of the city—the percentage of the Bayview population who are living below the poverty level is nearly double the citywide poverty rate, and 89% of Bayview residents are races other than white, who are most impacted by food insecurity. We hope to influence and motivate both residents of the Bayview district and the broader San Francisco community to support and participate in this effort towards food justice, and become active participants in creating a more sustainable and inclusive community. Our strategy is to empower and uplift our community by building trust and relationships with our farmers and residents, promoting health through nutrition education, and creating opportunities for connection and economic growth.

At [REDACTED], we are not only improving the local food landscape by providing equitable access to produce, but are also supporting local BIPOC food producers by providing a space for local farmers to sell their produce directly to consumers, supporting the development of a more sustainable food value chain. We strongly believe in upholding the dignity of workers and recognize the systemic barriers faced by historically marginalized farmers. Most of our vendors are BIPOC—with focus on Black and Local Farmers and Producers. As part of our commitment to creating a more equitable food system, we are establishing a racial diversity fund to provide financial assistance to struggling farmers who may have difficulty paying their stall fees. This funding will also help our entrepreneurs struggling with the \$150 application fee and allow us to offer our vendors a waived application fee. As we continue to support environmentally sustainable practices and local BIPOC farmers in under-resourced communities, we are working towards building a more resilient food system that is rooted in the principles of justice and sustainability.

By enabling us to expand and enhance our outreach efforts, while also providing educational opportunities and support for local BIPOC farmers and community members, this funding will help promote greater equity and social justice in the food system, while also fostering greater community engagement and empowerment.

A note on our commitment to diversity and inclusion:

At [REDACTED], we believe in having control and stewardship over our own narrative, and that solutions to our pressing food and farm systems issues must be shaped by those most impacted. This is why DragonSpunk is a BIPOC-led and serving organization.

Co-founder and President, [REDACTED], a Black and Indigenous farmer, and community leader, who is transforming the narrative around agricultural systems and environmental advocacy, leads [REDACTED] with an approach that is rooted in Indigenous practices, emphasizing the importance of caring for the land and working with nature. [REDACTED] is committed to not only restoring balance in the environment but also providing a safe space for every member of every race, sexual orientation, gender identification regardless of age or religious belief. Our board of directors reflect a multi-ethnic, multi-gendered leadership. Our team consists of Indigenous women, Bi-racial people of various orientations, and people of all colors and ethnicities: Latinx, African American, Asian Pacific Islander/Chinese, Jamaican American, and Indigenous American.

By centering and celebrating the voices and stories of BIPOC community members, [REDACTED] is challenging the dominant narratives and stereotypes that have historically marginalized and silenced these voices. We deeply understand the historical and current disparities and inequalities related to the community we work in, and through our farmers market and environmental education initiatives, we aim to take our power back in food and agriculture while actively working to advance racial justice.