



# ANNUAL REPORT 2018

**Counsel, Capital, Connections**  
**Your community business partner since 1979**

[fccdc.org](http://fccdc.org)

## Dear Members and Friends:

At the Franklin County Community Development Corporation, we believe that **COMMUNITY MATTERS**. Those two words are, in fact, central to our mission as an organization. The FCCDC was formed 39 years ago to maximize community control over our future economic destiny. In that time, we have provided financing to hundreds of small businesses that could not obtain traditional financing - businesses that are the backbone of the region.

We also believe that equity matters. This past year the staff and Board spent time thinking about what this means and we started working on issues of structural racism, implicit bias, equity and power. As we continue to expand our programs and geographic area throughout western MA we want to ensure we are contributing in a positive way to all the residents of our region, in particular people who have been underserved.

The FCCDC's fiscal year 2018 was busy and some big projects have come to fruition!

- ✓ The large cold storage facility opened and has been 80 – 90% full most of the year and new innovative food businesses continue to use the Food Processing Center.
- ✓ The first three years of the Pioneer Valley Grows Community Investment Fund have been successful and we are seeking another 1.25M from investors to get out to entrepreneurs that are improving our farm and food sector.
- ✓ We continue providing business assistance and financing to small businesses that cannot obtain traditional financing.

Massachusetts continues to offer the Community Investment Tax Credit program so our contributors that give \$1,000 or more receive 50% Tax Credits. This means the FCCDC receives more, and donors get half back from the state.

Please read more in the following pages about how we are working to have a strong impact on the economic health of our region. This is the **community's** economic development organization and we encourage you to participate as a client, a mentor, a collaborator, a donor or in a variety of other ways.

Sincerely,

John Waite  
Executive Director

# Business Lending Program

The Franklin County CDC's Lending Program continues to make loans up to \$200,000 to businesses that cannot obtain financing either in whole or in part from traditional financial institutions. We currently operate 6 loan funds with combined lending capacity of almost \$4.5 million. **Alan Singer** continues to lead this department and works with businesses in all sectors including Food, Agriculture, Manufacturing, Retail and Service. **Arthur Haselkorn** continues as our Credit Analyst. Our focus is always on businesses that create jobs and benefit the community.

As of 6/30/18, the Franklin County CDC was servicing a total of 92 loans with an aggregate principal balance outstanding of approximately \$3.1 million – versus 85 active loans and a principal balance of \$2.7 million the year before.

During FY '18, a total of 21 loans were approved and extended representing an aggregate principal balance of approximately \$944.2k. During the past fiscal year, five loans aggregating to approximately \$96.3k were paid off well ahead of their, respective amortization schedules and mostly via commercial bank re-financings.

Subsequent to 6/30/18, a total of four loans that were approved prior to 6/30/2018 were subsequently funded totaling approximately \$418k.

**Loan Funds:** The FCCDC continues to revolve loans from the following sources:

**U.S. Economic Development Administration's SSED Fund**

**U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Rural Development – Intermediary Relending Program**

**U.S. Dept. of Agriculture. Rural Micro-Enterprise Assistance Program**

**Ten Town Loan Fund:** Community Development Block Grant funds started this program in 1988 for the towns of Ashfield, Bernardston, Charlemont, Colrain, Erving, Gill, Hawley, Northfield, Warwick and Whately

**Four Town Loan Fund:** Community Development Block Grant funds started this program in 1988 for the towns of Buckland, Greenfield, Montague and Shelburne

**Pioneer Valley Grows Investment Fund, Inc** is a supporting organization of the FCCDC. The PVGrows Fund is managed by **Rebecca Busansky** and supports farm and food businesses that have a positive impact on our regional food system. From inception on October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2018, the PVGrows Fund had received \$1.25M from Community Investors and we had disbursed 26 loans with several more in the pipeline.

## List of New Borrowers during FY '18 (Borrower/Business Name – Town):

*(Asterisks denotes PVGrows loans funded through the PVGrows Investment Fund, Inc.)*

Manuel Palacios – Ashfield, MA

Ruggieri Liquors – Greenfield, MA (2)

Total Cleaning Plus - Hatfield, MA

Fresh Jones – Greenfield, MA

Nova Motorcycles – Turners Falls, MA

Soundscape Merchandise – Belchertown, MA (2)

Mo's Fudge – Shelburne Falls, MA

\*Mundo Artisans – Easthampton, MA

\*Nourish Wellness Café – Northampton, MA (2)

\*Six Rivers Farm, Bowdoinham, ME

\*Carsons Cans – Deerfield, MA

\*Ostara Luna Farm – Ashfield, MA

\*Ciesluk's Market – So. Deerfield, MA

\*Hillside Organic Catering – Bernardston, MA

\*Hagers Farm Market – Shelburne, MA

\*Daily Operation – Easthampton, MA

\*Endeavour Transportation – So. Deerfield, MA

\*What Cheer Fruit & Produce – Northampton, MA

**The FCCDC extends a deep appreciation for the years of support that John Shiels provided through membership of the loan committee and for many years of support and friendship.**

# Business Development

Business development activities continued in Franklin, Hampshire and Northern Berkshire counties. Counseling and trainings were delivered primarily by **Amy Shapiro**, Business Development Director.

## **FY 2018 Activities and outcomes were focused on counsel, capital and connections.**

**Counsel:** 2017-18 Results – The FCCDC served a total of 213 people, of which 52 clients received more than 5 hours of services (38 individual counseling, 14 trained). Of those:

- 25 women, 8 minorities, 2 immigrants, 3 starting a business due to unemployment, 2 veterans
- 12 clients created or acquired a new business
- 4 businesses were stabilized
- 17 businesses grew or increased revenue
- 19 businesses continue to receive technical assistance
- 12 jobs created
- 96 jobs preserved
- 13 were assisted with financing from a source other than the FCCDC valued at \$2,347,000

Trainings:

- Free Monthly Information Sessions continue to be offered the first Wednesday
- Free Launching a Food Product Information Sessions offered the third Tuesday
- New this year was a 2 session financial workshop called Making it Happen: Probability and Success for farmers using video conferencing with participants in the FCCDC classroom and the instructor with other participants at Holyoke Community College. This collaboration was between CISA, Carrot Project and the FCCDC.

### **Capital:**

Collaboration continued with Valley and Hilltown CDCs to secure a Mass Growth Capital Corporation grant for western MA.

### **Connections:**

Our strong collaborations continue to build a vibrant community. The following are some of the partners we have worked with this year:

- Greater Shelburne Falls Area Business Assoc.
- Greenfield Community College
- MA Association of CDCs
- Franklin County Chamber of Commerce
- Northampton Chamber of Commerce
- Lever Inc.
- Mass Collage of Liberal Arts
- Valley & Hilltown CDCs
- Common Capital
- Franklin Regional Council of
- GovernmentsFranklin/Hampshire REB

The 8th Annual Celebrating Entrepreneurs event was held on May 10, 2018.

This year's Haas Entrepreneur of the Year was awarded to Hager's Farm Market, a family farm & market owned by Chip and Sherry with daughter Kim and husband Aaron Stevens located in Shelburne Falls.

Previous Haas Entrepreneur of the Year winners:

- 2018 Hager Farm Market
- 2017 PV Squared Solar
- 2016 Alber Hearing Services
- 2015 Elmer's Store
- 2014 Hillside Pizza
- 2013 Zoar Outdoor
- 2012 Small Corp
- 2011 People's Pint

# Western MA Food Processing Center

2017-2018 was a year of continued expansion for the Western MA Food Processing Center (FPC). We added new equipment, members, and processing staff. We developed our offerings and educational services, and we broadened our reach in the state and region. Our biggest accomplishment, in terms of expansion, was when we brought the cooler and freezer warehouses on line in December of 2017.

**Liz Buxton** finished her 5th year as Director of Operations. She continues to help clients with recipe development, scale-up and production and manage the logistics of our new freezer cooler warehouse. **Joanna Benoit** finished her 2<sup>st</sup> year and has shifted to our Food Systems Program Manager. She focused on helping farmers and other clients add value to local food including the Valley Vegetables vegetable freezing operation. This last year, we worked with World Farmers International to trial IQF Jilo, a Brazilian eggplant that is in high demand in ethnic markets.

**Dan Coblyn** transitioned out of the Food Processing Center and into the new processing space of our most recent graduates, Shire City Herbals, where he supports their facility maintenance needs. **Damien Vieu** was promoted to Production Supervisor, where he has taken more of a leadership role in daily operations and processing. **Evan Manning** has continued his role as Shift Leader. **Justin Atwill, John Riggelman and Peter Freisem** have continued to be a reliable and knowledgeable kitchen crew through the busy season and during year round co-packs. We welcomed **Ari Rodriguez** to the production crew this year. She has proven time and time again to be efficient, speedy, and engaged in the work on the production floor. With the development and continued dedication of this crew, the Food Processing Center has been able to do multiple productions at one time and absorb all the additional logistics of running the new freezer and cooler warehouse spaces. We have also continued to work with Franklin County House of Corrections and have had five pre-release inmates working with the crew on production.

Through grants from the MA Dept. of Agricultural Resources and USDA's Local Food Promotion Program, we have been able to upgrade some of our equipment. Liz has been excited to buy larger kettles- two 125 gallon kettles, and two 60 gallon kettles. We have also purchased a new root washer that both washes and peels root veggies. We look forward to helping more local farmers with this machine. A new air compressor, labeler, and spin dryer have also been added to the facility this year.

In partnership with Just Roots and Community Health Center of Franklin County, we kicked off a grant through USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture aimed at food access year round in low income areas in our communities. We envision frozen and shelf stable foods from the FPC to be a big part of this in the next year. We have also been awarded a grant through Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Programs (SARE) in partnership with UMass Food Science and UMass Resource Economics. The goal of this grant is to research marketability of local IQF spinach and local IQF blueberries. While specifically geared to these two products, this research will ultimately inform retail decisions for our entire frozen vegetable operation.

In the 2018 growing season, we have processed and frozen over 50,000 lb. of local product. This number is actively increasing as we continue to process later and later.

The FCCDC continued to influence both the state and local food system through our work on Food Policy Councils. Most notably, the FCCDC was selected to co-administer the newly funded, long awaited Massachusetts Food Trust Program. This program provides loans, grants, and business assistance for increasing access to healthy, affordable food in low-income, underserved areas.

## This year we have worked with the following farms and food businesses:

We have supported the commercial manufacturing and product development for 65 businesses in 2017-2018.

Alicia's Homemade  
American Living  
Apex Orchards  
Artisan Beverage  
Augmon McQuay Enterprises  
Backyard Food Co.  
Barts Snows Nice Cream  
Bascom Farm  
Beancake Company  
Big Picture Beef-NC  
Bostrom Farm-NC  
Coutts Specialty Foods  
Diana and Kasee Smith  
East Coast Kelp Farm  
Feliciano Foods-NC  
Full Moon Ghee  
Gold Thread  
Guiding Star Grange  
Herrell's Development Co  
Holyoke Hummus  
Invisible City Apiary  
Kitchen Garden Farm  
Kringle Farm Table  
Kobe Co. Inc.  
Kuhl LLC  
New Edibles/Vibesman Foods  
North Hadley Chili Pepper Company  
Old Friends Farm\*  
Oxen Hill Farm  
Outlook Farm  
Park Hill Orchard  
Phoenix Fruit Farm  
Plant Colors Group

Plentiful  
Pricklee LLC.  
Real Pickles  
Red Fire Farm  
Saw Mill Site Farm  
Shire City Herbals  
Simple Gifts Farm  
Smokey Divas-NC  
South Quabbin Food Co. (Jay's Wicked)  
Spikers LLC  
Steem Peanut Butter-NC  
Stillman Farm  
Top This-NC  
Valley Vegetables  
Vermont Elderberry  
Vermont Salumi  
Wayfare Foods  
West County Cider-NC  
Woodstock Hill  
Whole Harmony  
Willies Superbrew  
The Yerbarry-NC  
Yummy Yammy-NC  
Zoni Foods  
Bardwell Farm, Hatfield MA  
Czajkowski Farm, Hadley MA  
David Mokrzecki Farm, Hadley MA  
Harlow Farm, Westminster VT  
Harvest Farm, Whately MA  
Long Plain Farm, Whately MA  
Plainville Farm, Hadley MA  
Wyscoki Farm, Amherst MA

Many of these businesses are local farms and/or use ingredients sourced from local farms.

## Venture Center

The Venture Center remains full and vibrant. **Judy Scherer** and **Jackie Spooner** (and Amelio, the feline receptionist) continue to make sure everything runs efficiently with the Venture Center and all the FCCDC operations. Finance Director **Vinny Natale** continues to keep track of our finances and helps us balance our mission with financial realities. **Olivia Morris**, our intern, has been a great help with special projects, and **Forest McBarry** was a force as our summer intern.

We had no transitions this year and our tenants are wonderful and operating healthy businesses.

- ✓ **Silver Screen Design** [www.silverscreendesign.com](http://www.silverscreendesign.com) -- the best resource for branding your company, organization, or event. They offer hundreds of design options and products. It's like having your own advertising agency at your fingertips at a fraction of the cost.
- ✓ **Artisan Beverage Cooperative** - [www.artbev.com](http://www.artbev.com) -- maker of Katalyst Kombucha, and Green River Ambrosia's Ginger Libation and mead. Their merger three years ago and formation of a worker-owner cooperative has led to continued growth.
- ✓ **Cellu-Spray** [www.celluspray.net](http://www.celluspray.net) -- From small additions to commercial buildings they can help you use less energy with the highest quality cellulose available today.
- ✓ **Our Family Farm** [www.ourfamilyfarms.com](http://www.ourfamilyfarms.com) -- best milk ever! A marketing co-op of local dairy farmers working together to offer fresh, local, hormone (rBST\*) free milk.
- ✓ **Pioneer Co-op of Franklin County** -- a housing cooperative
- ✓ **Franklin County Community Meals Program** [fccmp.org](http://fccmp.org) -- a wonderful organization that provides community meals (Greenfield, Turners Falls and Orange) and operates the Orange Food Pantry.

- ✓ **Equal Exchange** [www.equalexchange.coop](http://www.equalexchange.coop). This is their western MA office. Equal Exchange's mission is to build long-term trade partnerships that are economically just and environmentally sound, to foster mutually beneficial relationships between farmers and consumers and to demonstrate, through our success, the contribution of worker co-operatives and Fair Trade to a more equitable, democratic and sustainable world.
- ✓ **Goldthread** [www.goldthreadherbs.com/](http://www.goldthreadherbs.com/) produces healthy plant-based tonics with nourishing herbs and spices that are impeccably sourced, expertly blended and powerfully transformative. And so delicious!

## Board of Directors as of 6/30/18

A J Bresciano, Chairperson  
 Chuck Bellinger, Vice-Chair  
 Andrea Nathanson, Treasurer  
 Mary Chicoine, Clerk

Matt Allen  
 Jessica Atwood  
 Kristi Bodin  
 Barbara Campbell  
 Claire Chang

Margaret Christie  
 Darren Gale  
 Gary Gruber  
 Corrine (Corky) Sysun  
 Philip Silva

Denise Coyne, Advisory Board  
 Susan Worgaftik, Advisory Board

## FCCDC Staff

Joanna Benoit  
 Rebecca Busansky  
 Liz Buxton  
 Arthur Haselkorn

Vinny Natale  
 Judy Scherer  
 Amy Shapiro

Alan Singer  
 Jackie Spooner  
 John Waite

## FPC Production Staff

Justin Atwell  
 John Riggelman

Peter Freisem  
 Ari Rodriguez

Eva Manning  
 Damien Vieu

