

# DOCUMENTING THE IMPACT OF GROW & GIVE PROGRAM ON COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Madeleine Breza

Denyse Schrenker- Eagle County Extension Specialist  
Amy Lentz-Weld County Extension Specialist  
Jennifer Aengst-Regional Health Specialist Mountain Region  
Megan Mueller- Assistant Professor Dept of Food Science  
Emma Dhimitri- Boulder County Extension County Specialist

## PROJECT INTRODUCTION



## PROJECT

This research specifically focused on the impact that G&G has on growers and patrons, as the impact on HRO's was researched last year. A questionnaire was created for interviews with each focusing on the themes of local produce, and health. My research was conducted in **Mesa County** and **Larimer County** Participation:

- 89 patron responses: Mesa County English: 40; Larimer County English: 26; Larimer County Spanish: 23; 7 grower responses

Data Collection Methods:

- Interviews with growers
- Outreach events at Community Food Bank in Mesa County and the Food Bank for Larimer County in Larimer County
- These two pantries were chosen due to receiving larger proportions of G&G donations in their respective county

## LIMITATIONS

- Small sample size
- Priming the target audience (participants immediately knew that the questions they were going to be asked were centered around local produce, therefore potentially priming them to skew their answers)
- Extension needs to provide more resources supporting interns in working with qualitative data research

## RESULTS

### Growers

**What was the reason you first decided to donate to G&G?**

"Have extra produce thought someone could use it"

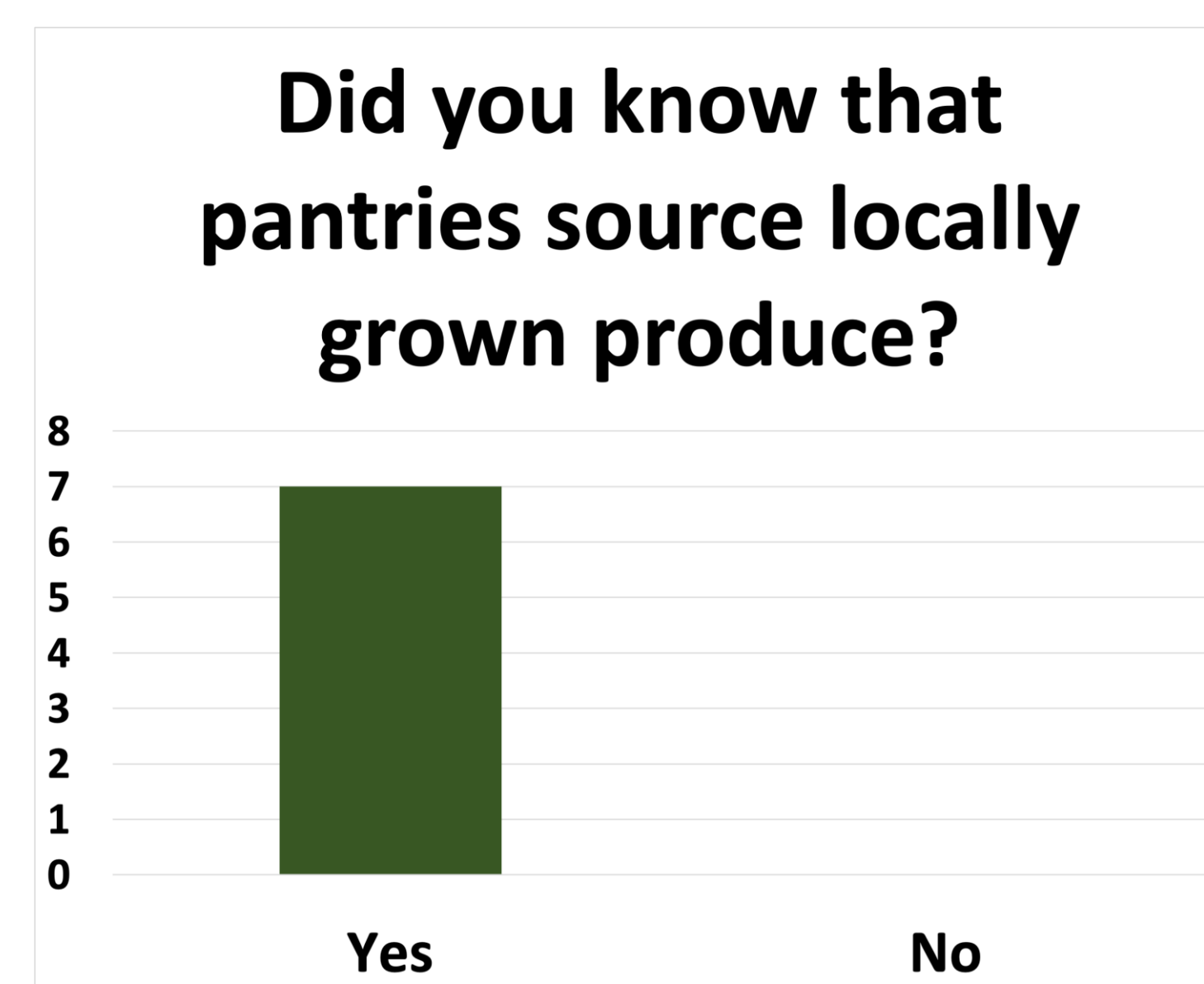
"I'm growing things anyways"

### Patrons

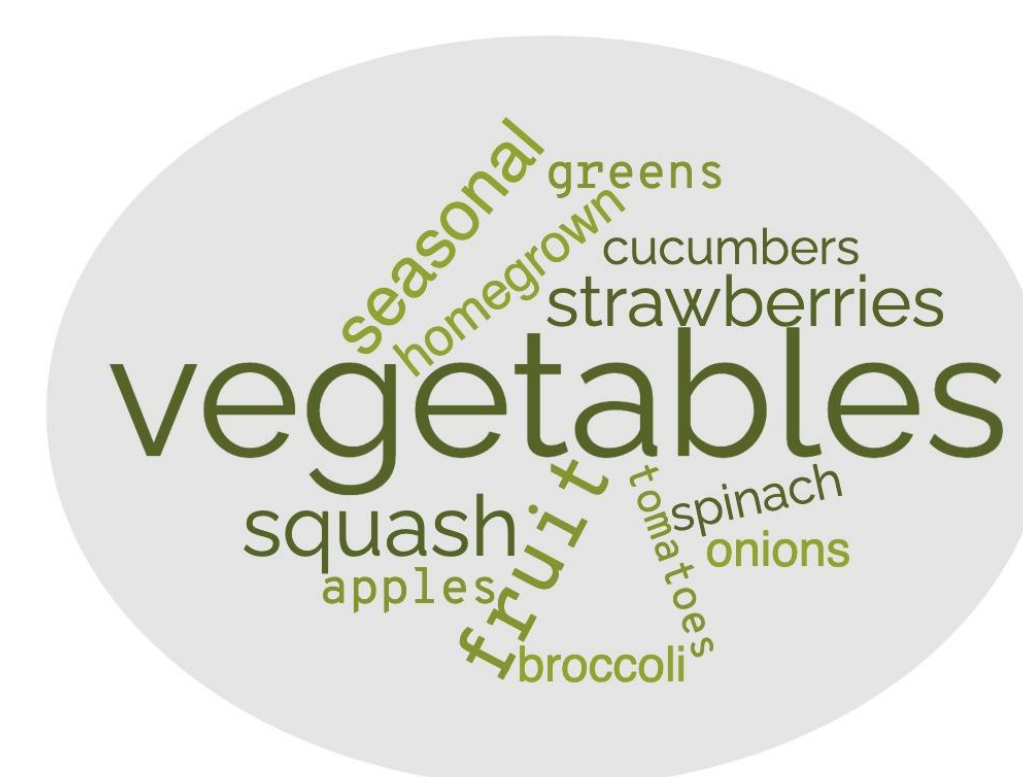
**How do you feel when there's local produce available at the pantry?**

"Transparency of where it's coming from"

"One of the better things the pantry does"



**What foods do you really look forward to bringing into your home?**



**What are 3 words that come to mind when you think of the word healthy?**

Energy  
Diet  
Attitude

Diet  
Exercise  
Vegetables

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Local produce is valued by both growers and patrons
  - Growers: Value participating in a program that gives back to the community and aligns with their principles
  - Patrons: Provides them highly valued local produce and aligns with their concepts of health
- Based off the important values identified, in order to recruit more growers, G&G should target outreach with a focus on community impact of donations and community well-being
- Data shows that HRO patrons value local produce therefore HRO's may benefit from promoting the local produce they provide, while advocating for G&G, leading to HRO's becoming stronger G&G recruiters and advocates

## FUTURE RESEARCH

- Food pantry patrons associate 'healthy' with fruit and vegetables (fv), future research could evaluate whether these feelings around fv and local produce mean that more produce is selected or consumed
- Does knowing that a pantry offers local fv change the patron's perception of the food pantry
- This research identified that local produce is valued by HRO patrons. Does conveying this message to growers increase their interest or increase their participation in G&G
- Does participating in a program like G&G which 'gives back to communities' increase peoples' social/emotional well-being



**Fun Fact:** This internship was extremely educational, and I gained valuable experience that I will take towards my work in Public Health nutrition.