PRESS RELEASE

Capital Roots Extends Support to Those in Need During Pandemic
Organization increases food access programs and hours to help anyone affected by COVID-19

(Troy, N.Y.) — Capital Roots has long been a community leader when it comes to providing access to food, education, and green spaces to residents of urban or low income environments across the Capital Region. A large number of the organization’s constituents are elderly, displaced, or sick and fall into a higher risk category for contracting and being affected by COVID-19. Through a rapid reorganization, the local non-profit has focused its efforts on ensuring everyone has the opportunity to get fresh produce without putting themselves at risk.

Produce Market Provides Local Fruits and Vegetables at Wholesale Prices

The Capital Roots Produce Market, located at their Urban Grow Center (594 River Street in Troy), has turned into a pick-up hub where orders are filled in just minutes. By sourcing directly from Capital Region farms, local produce is able to make its way to the customer through the shortest supply chain possible. These direct farm connections also ensure that the products at the market remain affordable.

Squash Hunger Program Distributes Produce to Food Pantries across Region

The Squash Hunger program, the organization’s food donation initiative which collects and distributes hundreds of pounds of fresh produce to Capital Regions pantries and shelters, has been increasing contributions in this time of need. As more people are experiencing hardships and shortages, emergency feeding programs that provide assistance are seeing a spike in new patrons.

“The Squash Hunger program has donated pounds and pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables each week,” says Nancy Wiley of Street Soldiers, in Schenectady. “The guests that come through our line now receive highly nutritious produce that we, quite frankly, would not be able to provide were it not for these weekly donations from the Squash Hunger program.”
Mobile Markets Program Deliver Fruits and Vegetables to Elderly, Low Income Housing

As New York residents are told to stay at home, Capital Roots Veggie Mobile® and Veggie Mobile® Sprout continue to bring fresh food directly into neighborhoods lacking access, this is including elderly and low income housing areas, and those unable to travel to stores. The Veggie Mobile is essential in providing healthy produce each week. Capital Roots has shifted its procedures to have an extra employee taking orders while another carefully packs their bags. Social distancing and disinfection precautions are taken every step of the way.

“As communities throughout the Capital Region adapt to this emerging – and uncertain – new reality, food security becomes a paramount concern,” said Amy Klein, Capital Roots CEO. “Capital Roots is particularly well-positioned to respond to this evolving situation, and we will continue to provide fresh food and essential services to the people who are most in need.”

There will be ongoing adjustments to programs in this rapidly changing environment, but Capital Roots will continue to operate and offer the services that so many local residents rely on. The organization has extended hours and established call-in ordering for anyone in the area, especially healthcare and emergency responders who need access to produce without exposing themselves or waiting in stores.

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*Capital Roots is a 45-year-old nonprofit organization that nourishes healthy communities with 55 Community Gardens, the Veggie Mobile®, Healthy Stores, the Produce Project, Squash Hunger and more. Capital Roots is headquartered at the Urban Grow Center, a regional food hub focused on urban agriculture and produce distribution to four counties, enabling Capital Roots to deliver local food and services to underserved neighborhoods and low-income families. Learn more at www.capitalroots.org.*

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