

Special Projects

Capital Campaign

Lettuce Dream would like to thank the community for the rally of support it received through our first Capital Campaign initiative. We would also like to thank the Northwest Missouri community for supporting our first capital campaign initiative. It may not seem like much to some, but 3% of total funds raised this year were from the capital campaign. We received numerous donations due to our campaign and these funds were an important factor in beginning phase one of construction. We are tremendously lucky to live in a community that gives back. Thank you for allowing us to build a better community.

Lettuce Dream & NAP Partnership

One of the best stepping stones that Lettuce Dream was given in achieving its goals for the year was the approval from The Missouri Department of Economic Development for the organization to have the aid of NAP (Neighborhood Assistance Program) tax credits.

Earning the NAP status meant that qualified donors could receive 70 percent of their donation as a tax credit. All donations came from either a business or an individual drawing on a business-related income. The tax credits are allowed to be applied to the donor's tax liability in the year the check is dated and for up to five years should the credit exceed each year's amount due. The total amount of the donation can also be used as a deduction on Federal and State taxes. The NAP credits were a vital provider of the needed funds for Lettuce Dream to continue the first phase of their greenhouse construction project.

With the NAP program, Lettuce Dream "sold" up to \$350,000 in tax credits. NAP allowed donors to give to a worthwhile project and reap tax benefits as well as knowing that they've helped with something that will truly benefit others.

Dick VanVector, Lettuce Dream's NAP Program Director, stated "Without this program and the funds we receive, we would not be able to start this project in the near future. With this program we anticipate starting construction in Spring, 2016."

The Sources of Our Funds



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Dear Friends,

For Lettuce Dream, 2015 was a year of growth and support as we started to see the necessary funding for Lettuce Dream come through. Our growth has positioned us to begin to constructing "phase one" with two greenhouses and an operations building early 2016. It's an exciting time for the board and our advisory board as we embark on our mission of developing a hydroponic agricultural operation that will give opportunity to help with training and employment for individuals with cognitive and developmental disabilities.

The support of the communities in Northwest Missouri and the state was felt and recognized this past year with many grants being awarded to our organization, a NAP (Neighborhood Assistance Tax Credit Program) award and the contributions of individual donors and groups. We are grateful for the donated services and goods. All of these things have made it possible for 2016 to be the year we begin to build.

From the very start when the need was discussed, a group of citizens took the opportunity at the time to commit to "making a difference" and to not just talk about the need, but actually do something about it. That group eventually became a passionate group of supporters and community members who have all worked very hard to make this dream come true. We want to welcome you to join us as we begin to build. At this time next year, we hope to successfully begin to market hydroponically and locally grown greens that are produced in a way that is environmentally sustainable. We are building a social enterprise for the community to learn, grow, embrace and value each other and the abilities we all have to work and to be members of the community. It is then that our "Dream" will be reality. We welcome you to join us and stay updated on our progress on Facebook and our website at lettucedream.org. Let us begin!

Sincerely,

Diane Francis
Board President - Lettuce Dream

Grants in 2015

Lettuce Dream was the recipient of several grants in 2015 that were vital pillars for the foundation of their fundraising initiative to begin building the greenhouses. Pictured above are Lettuce Dream board members receiving honorary checks for the MFA Oil Charitable Trust (left) and the Harry and Helena Messick Charitable Trust. Lettuce Dream was thankful for the following in 2015:

- Harold P. Dugdale Charitable Trust
- Taylor Charitable Trust
- Gladys Rickard Charitable Trust
- USDA Rural Development Grant
- Messick Charitable Trust
- MFA Oil Charitable Trust



Lettuce Dream board members, Dick VanVactor and Margaret Pierson were presented a check from the MFA Incorporated Charitable Foundation on July 1, 2015. Pictured left to right: VanVactor, Pierson and Jeff Meyer, Manager of MFA Agri-Services, Maryville.



Lettuce Dream was presented a grant check by U.S. Bank Trust Relationship Manager, Shannon Moore on behalf of the Harry and Helena Messick Charitable Trust. Pictured from left to right: Al Terhune, Connie Warden, Jackie Allenbrand, Shannon Moore and Diane Francis.

Trip to New Jersey

Lettuce Dream board members were able to visit Arthur & Friends, an organization under the leadership of Wendie Blanchard in New Jersey. Arthur & Friends is a leading hydroponic social enterprise increasing opportunities for individuals with disabilities. It has been the main source of inspiration and guidance for Lettuce Dream. During their visit, board members were able to witness first-hand how hydroponic technology greatly benefits the growth and cultivation of social enterprises like Lettuce Dream. Wendie Blanchard, director of Arthur & Friends, gave Lettuce Dream board members a tour of her organization's facilities and taught them many things about hydroponics. The trip to visit Arthur & Friends was made possible by The Heartland Foundation, Mosaic Life Care, and North Kansas City Hospital as providing financial support through the Healthy Partnerships Award.

Wendie demonstrated the starting of the seed and the various stages of transplanting and how the process has three phases: Seeding the oasis, transplanting seedling into a gully with a small opening in gullies where the plant remains until harvest. It is transplanted again a few weeks later into a much larger opening in gullies where the plant remains to harvest. All along the way a trickle of water with nutrients is supplied to the growing seed. When the plant is ready to harvest it is transported directly to consumers. The produce stays fresh longer than conventionally grown produce because it still has a root and does not need to be shipped long distances.



Wendie Blanchard, of Arthur & Friends, with Lettuce Dream board members Diann Schieber and Rego Jones during the board's trip to New Jersey.

Build The Dream Celebrity Waiter Dinner

Lettuce Dream hosted an evening where Northwest Missouri came together to raise money for our cause; something we believe can change the lives of individuals with developmental and cognitive disabilities and bring communities together, all while providing fresh produce to our areas.

The "Build the Dream – Celebrity Waiter Dinner" was a fundraising event held on October 10, 2015 in Maryville, Mo. It was our hope that we would raise funds for the building project that will bring a hydroponic greenhouse operation to Northwest Missouri. We also wanted to share updates about our greenhouse construction project with those who are as excited as we are about our growth this year.

We were thrilled to have many "famous" faces as our waiters this year, all of whom entertained our guests and provided many laughs. We were also honored to have Lee Jones as a special guest speaker. Lee shared his inspirational story about overcoming the boundaries set for people with developmental and cognitive disabilities to achieve his dream of becoming a personal trainer and motivational speaker. Our dinner featured locally grown food from "farm to table" businesses in our community. We had around 80 volunteers and waiters to thank for their hard work to help make the event possible.

This year's event proved to be an enjoyable night for the hundreds of supporters who attended and we are happy to announce that because of this year's event, we raised enough money to officially begin our construction project that will begin in April, 2016.

