



It all started with a tip about a grant available from the Kansas Health Foundation. And then, as it happens, a speck of an idea was formed.

This May, members of the Social Justice and Mission committee submitted a \$5000 grant application for Hunger Free Kansas' inaugural round of grants. This grant would be used to create connections among local food producers and Salina Grace. By purchasing locally grown and raised food, FPC would be spending grant money to serve fresh, local, healthy food at our weekly lunch meal at Salina Grace.

In June, we were notified that there were 160 applications submitted, and FPC was one of the 80 selected! A few weeks later, Amanda Littell began working to introduce FPC and Salina Grace to several local growers. It was interesting to learn that these producers were unaware of Salina Grace and the work they are doing with our homeless and hungry neighbors.

Amanda and Chandra Cooper began discussing the various ways we could serve and preserve the abundance of beautiful fresh produce that we are fortunate to have access to. BLT wraps were added to the menu. Roasted corn on the cob will be served this week. Fresh, ripe cantaloupe was enjoyed. But, there's so much more! Grant dollars were also used to purchase a new large-capacity upright freezer to keep all of this bounty fresh for use all year long.

On Saturday, 7/19, SJM hosted a small but mighty group of folks to help process corn and cherries for our Salina Grace Wednesday meals. Betsy Scholten pitted almost **20** pounds of cherries (24 cups!) from The Fruit Truck for yummy desserts this fall. We also froze **72** ounces of fresh blackberries.



Amanda Littell and Cheri Parr cut corn off of **216** ears of sweet corn from Jirak Bros. The corn was par cooked, cooled and then frozen, ready for use in soups, stews, creamed corn and other yummy meals this winter.

Then, FPC has purchased over 100 pounds of tomatoes from Salt and Light Homestead and members of the congregation have processed those into pizza sauce, marinara, salsa and tomato soup. In addition, 30 pounds of potatoes are being stored. We have also bought



Salt and Light Homestead



Jirak Bros

Colorado peaches to serve and preserve, and we look forward to the additional late-summer and fall crops that will become available. We can't wait to continue to share the stories of the farmers we will be supporting and to get to share time with you in the kitchen. You may even learn a new tip or trick for how to de-seed tomatoes, or find a pizza sauce recipe that you will add to your dinner rotation!! We are blessed to have the kitchen full of commercial equipment to do this work together.

However, this is not only a project for SJM. We need your help! The tomato crop has been amazing this year, and we need to continue preserving. We will have lots of zucchini, squash and pumpkin to process and freeze. Be on the lookout for pop-up opportunities to come to Blair Hall and put on your apron...or answer the call when a member invites you to join. If you'd like to know when the next opportunity is, call or text Amanda at 785-452-2141.

For more information about the Kansas Health Foundation, Hunger Free Kansas and the Kansas Leadership Center, visit <https://kansasleadershipcenter.org/khf-awards-423k-to-87-kansas-nonprofits-fighting-food-insecurity/>