



Huerta del Valle Corporate Office  
310 E. Philadelphia St #71  
Ontario, CA 91761  
Eng: 917-734-8108  
Span: 909-509-2996

## YEAR END REPORT: New Goals and Vision

July 1 2016- June 30 2017

Letter from CEO

This year was marked by great achievements. Beyond successes internally, we have been recognized this year for outstanding work in our field. With all of the attention and appreciation we have received we have become even more encouraged and motivated to move forward setting even higher goals and challenging ourselves to do more and serve the community better.

We were able to bring on our first employees this year and begin the process of creating stable farm jobs within a growing local food system. We received grants from the USDA, Cal-Endowment, Kaiser Permanente, NRCS, and the National Association of Conservation Districts. We focused even more on developing community leadership and training. We diverted thousands of pounds of food waste from landfills and used it to grow 60 community garden plots and thousands of pounds of vegetable crops for our affordably priced CSA and on-site sales.

Each achievement brings with it a brief satisfaction, and then quickly a desire to do more and scale up the model to serve a greater community impact. We have our eyes set on Huerta del Valle number 2 in Jurupa Valley and we are set on creating sustaining membership and powerful educational programming at the garden space.

Our vision has become building one garden every mile and transforming our landscape into one where equitable affordable access to the highest quality foods is produced by an emerging industry of green collar urban farmers. We believe this will create opportunity to address systemic inequity in struggling communities not only locally, but as a model in the region and nationally.

**Maria Alonso – Executive Director**



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### Programs and Activities:

#### *4-year Anniversary: Raiz Cultura y Tradicion*

This year we celebrated our 4 year anniversary with a very special event that centered the diverse and rich cultures of our community. Full of traditional dance, music, story telling, arts, crafts, and of course foods the community garden was filled with over 800 people who came together over the idea of power through diversity and understanding. The garden has been a rich place for everything from food to gathering to organizing to learning.

#### *Gala Dinners*

Huerta del Valle hosted many potluck events and it would be rare to come to the garden and not see someone eating lunch there, making tortillas, or blending a fresh green smoothie. Food is at the core of what we do and we encourage the use of the produce we grow whenever possible. We were fortunate to also host a dinner for





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conservationists from of all of California's counties through our partners at IERCD. Community members cooked local foods with traditional recipes and we broke bread on a crisp November night.



### *First Employees!*

Through sales of produce and our USDA-NIFA CFP grant we were able to bring on our first employees. Our director





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and projects manager became employees and we were able to bring on two farmer/composters and administrative staff to support programs and organizational operations. Six of our 8 employees are local community members emphasizing our focus on local community development and prioritizing community members.

### *Farmers Markets and Onsite sales*

Huerta del Valle produced enough food this year to be able to participate in our first farmers Markets. We participated only in the Running Springs farmers market this year because our onsite local sales were greater than ever before. This year we had an average of ten people coming to get produce daily at the farm often using EBT/SNAP benefits.

### *New Partnerships*

Huerta del Valle has built some exciting new partnerships this year including IERCD SLEWS program, Unidos Por



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La Musica, California Endowment, USDA, Jurupa Valley Parks District, Reeder Ranch Family Foundation, RUSD Food Hub, Pitzer College's CASA Ontario. We are thankful for the opportunity to collaborate with such institutions to bring more resources to each others' programs and enhance our impact on the region.

### *Composting*

This year we composted another 500,000 lbs of organic wastes. We improved our composting processes and added vermicomposting bins at the garden. We are anxiously awaiting our new tractor, which was approved through an NRCS EQUIP program. The new machinery will help the process even more. We have established new food waste partners and area looking to start more collection activities around the region.

### *Urban Farming/New Farm Site!*

Our urban farm is a 2.5 acre demonstration farm that serves four main purposes: 1) Farmer training, 2) Food production





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for sales off site at retail prices to generate needed resources for long term sustainability, 3) Production of high quality nutrient dense foods for access locally on site at affordable prices, and 4) Employment opportunities. This year we were able to distribute the most produce and experienced the least loss of crops. We began the process of moving our production over to a wholesaling strategy for greater efficient and greater ability to penetrate local markets. We are also very excited to announce a new farm site that we will be opening next fall in Jurupa Valley. This new site will allow us to grow more produce and supply high quality products year round in our CSA and to local customers. This is all part of our plan to “Scale up” and “replicate” our work to fulfill our vision of a garden every mile.

### *Community Gardening*

Our community garden continues to thrive with 60 families participating having plots we have been able to have a deep



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impact on their lives by creating access to the resources needed to grow their own fresh foods. Having a garden manager involved this year has improved engagement, gardening success, and retention of gardeners. We plan to work with our county Master Gardeners in the upcoming season to further educate our participants.

### *Education and Leadership Development*

Huerta del Valle has hosted a weekly members' meeting every Monday since June 2013. This is an opportunity for members to develop not only as participants, but also as leaders. This year leaders were engaged in twice monthly leadership development classes at our office space at CASA Ontario. Community leaders traveled to conferences, participated in weekly nutrition classes, participated in an innovative Holistic Health Coaches training, and participated in a unique leadership training called "Life Vision." Our partners at IERCD will be providing funding for the upcoming fiscal year to host a





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community education coordinator position to further develop our educational programming.

### *Abejas Youth*

Our Youth Literacy Program called Abejas thrived over the school year, but has been put on hold until the new community education coordinator position is up and running. A membership drive will be launched in the new year to help sustain the community education position as we have recognized sustainable staffing to be the big challenge for maintaining the educational programs.

### *Community Supported Agriculture*

After our pilot program last summer, we decided to hire a CSA coordinator to better manage the CSA program. We restarted the program in March 2017 and ran with an average of 20 members. We were recently awarded a NACD grant through our partners at IERCDC to hire another full time CSA coordinator who will have the goal of growing the program up to at least 40 members and work





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with other regional farmers to use their produce in the boxes.

*Fruit of the labor!*

This year was our first year of fruit production on all of our fruit trees! Peaches, nectarines, plums, apricots, pomegranate, guava, apple, strawberries, and jujube.







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### Our year in numbers

Food waste composted – 500,000 lbs

Over a grand total 1,000,000 lbs since 2013

Produce harvested – 40,000 lbs

Over 100,000 lbs since 2013

Farm sales - \$45,000

Additional farm fundraiser earnings \$15,000

Families in the garden - 60

Visitors and volunteers - 1630

Workshops at the garden – 13

Weekly meetings – 49

Gardener/Community leadership roles – 8

Huerta del Valle employees – 7





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## Visit us and learn

Huerta del Valle is open to the public six days a week.

831 E. Belmont st. Ontario, CA 91761 on the West side of Bon View Park.

Open hours are 8am – 12pm and 4pm – 7pm subject to seasonal change.

Huerta del Valle hosts tours for schools, foreign exchange students, young farmers, local nurses, university students, city officials, aspiring gardeners and many more. Contact us at [info.huertadelvalle@gmail.com](mailto:info.huertadelvalle@gmail.com) for volunteer opportunities and/or to schedule a tour.

Weekly meetings are held at the garden on Mondays one hour after the garden opens. These are open to the public and it is highly encouraged for you to attend. Every other Monday is the community leadership development meeting at CASA Ontario.

Monthly meetings/workshops are held every third Monday of the month and are themed according to community input from the prior month.

Monthly workdays are also open to the public and usually take place one Saturday each month. Dates tba based on agreements at weekly meetings and announced via social media.





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# Involvement opportunities

We created a website this year! [huertadelvalle.org](http://huertadelvalle.org) Visit us online to stay up to date. Look out for our newsletter and membership drive in 2018!

Follow us on facebook and instagram for the latest information on events and ways to be a part of this movement.

For any inquiries related to our Forms 990 or other public information related to organizational finances please contact: [mariaalonso1223@gmail.com](mailto:mariaalonso1223@gmail.com) or [artmaxlev@gmail.com](mailto:artmaxlev@gmail.com)



### Notable Awards

American Planning Association National Level “Grassroots Initiative Award.”

Awarded USDA-NIFA Community Food Projects Grant

First place in “Center for Community Policy and Leadership’s Health Innovations Prize”

Maria Alonso received the “Community Leader Award” from Kaiser Permanente Foundation