ORGANIZATIONAL MISSION

Soul Fire Farm is a Afro-Indigenous centered community farm committed to uprooting racism and seeding sovereignty in the food system. We raise and distribute life-giving food as a means to end food apartheid. With deep reverence for the land and wisdom of our ancestors, we work to reclaim our collective right to belong to the earth and to have agency in the food system. We bring diverse communities together on this healing land to share skills on sustainable agriculture, natural building, spiritual activism, health, and environmental justice. We are training the next generation of activist-farmers and strengthening the movements for food sovereignty and community self-determination.

ORGANIZATIONAL CORE VALUES - HOW WE DO

- Hard work, productivity, efficiency, grit
- Multiracial organization, POC leadership, Afro-centric
- Hard skills - level up farming, building, cooking, and survival skills
- Honesty and transparency
- Distributed leadership
- Excellence - quality of product, beauty of space
- Family vibe - shared meals, human connection
- Human scale - grow out, not up
- Deference to elders, celebration & inclusion of youth
- Thrift, frugality, and fiscal responsibility
- Safer and inclusive space for diverse identities
- Climate stewardship
- Ethical purchasing, local sourcing
- Hard skills - level up farming, building, cooking, and survival skills
- Mutual aid with neighbors, farmers, networks
- Each one teach one
- Sharing land and resources with community
- Homesteading - producing own fuel, food, buildings
- Cultural biomimicry
- Climate stewardship
- Earth reverence, biodiversity stewardship
- Climate stewardship
- Humane treatment of animals in integrated, holistic farm system that includes livestock & crops
- Ancestor reverence, implement heritage farm practices
- Sabbath - rest for humans and the land

MOVEMENT-WIDE VISION

To free ourselves we must feed ourselves... By 2050 U.S. Black farmers will regeneratively steward 100,000 farms on 10 million acres of rural and urban land (400,000 BIPOC farmers on 200 million acres) providing food, habitat, medicine, ecosystem services, and healing to our communities and experiencing agency and societal support for our honorable work. ¹

THEORY OF CHANGE

We grow farmers and land stewards. We are Catalyst - Spark - Ignition.

### JUSTICE: We need equity in access to land, sustenance, and power in the food system. The food system is built upon land theft and genocide of indigenous people and the exploitation of Black and Brown labor. Black farmers currently operate around 1% of the nation’s farms, having lost over 12 million acres to USDA discrimination, racist violence, and legal trickery. 85% of the people working the land in the US are Latinx migrant workers, yet only 2.5% of farms are owned and operated by Latinxs. People of color are disproportionately likely to live under food apartheid and suffer from diabetes, heart disease, and other diet related illness. Labor laws continue to permit the exploitation of farm and food workers.

### ECOLOGY: We must reverse industrial agriculture’s damage to the planet and harm to vulnerable communities. Industrial agriculture is responsible for 24% of greenhouse gas emissions, 70% of water use, and 37% of land use. Environmental impacts of climate change, pesticide exposure, and toxic pollutants harm communities of color disproportionately. Regenerative farming practices rooted in African-Indigenous wisdom and technologies are part of the solution to feeding the world without undermining its ecology, and have been ignored, erased, or appropriated by mainstream society.

### HEALING: It is time to heal from a history of oppression that has disconnected our communities from land. A history of land-based oppression and forced migration have resulted in a concentration of people of color in urban environments, often devoid of the psycho-spiritual and somatic benefits of connection to the earth. “Nature deficit disorder” can lead to ADHD, anxiety, depression, poor eyesight, and lower achievement in school. Lack of access to quality food and outdoor play is putting youth at higher risk for early onset diabetes and learning challenges, and later in life, heart disease, sleep apnea, psychological challenges, stroke, and cancer.

### SEED COMMUNITY FOOD SOVEREIGNTY (what we do)

#### REGENERATE: We use Afro-indigenous agroforestry, silvopasture, wildcrafting, polyculture, and ancestral farming practices to regenerate 80 acres of mountainside land, producing fruits, plant medicine, pasture-raised livestock, honey, mushrooms, cultural seeds, and vegetables, with the majority of the harvest provided to people living under food apartheid and targeted by state violence. Our ancestral farming practices build topsoil, sequester soil carbon, and increase biodiversity. The buildings on the farm are hand-constructed, using local wood, adobe, straw bales, solar heat, and reclaimed materials.

#### EQUIP: Through our “Afro-Indigenous Farming” immersion and workshops we annually equip hundreds of adults and youth with the land-based skills needed to reclaim leadership as farmers and food justice organizers in their communities, to heal their relationship with earth, and to imagine bolder futures. Using land as a tool to heal from racial trauma, we work to reverse the dangerously low percentage of farms being owned and operated by people of color and increase the leadership of people of color in the food justice movement. Through our Fellowship Program, graduates receive ongoing support to access resources, land, funding, mentorship, and platform.

#### MOBILIZE: We are mobilizing the public to create a racially just food system. We collaborate with regional, national, and international food sovereignty coalitions to advance reparations, establish action platforms, and work on campaigns for farmer survival and dignity. Each year, we inspire thousands of community members through speaking at conferences, publishing articles/book chapters, and facilitating workshops for activists to share tangible methods for dismantling racism in the food system and increasing community food sovereignty.

#### SUSTAIN: We uplift radical community care. In line with our work to advance healing justice and liberation in the wider community, we commit to an internal team culture that uplifts compassionate communication, ample rest, distributed leadership, fair compensation, and investment in personal and professional development as well as adequate infrastructure to support our team and community’s well being.
2022 Strategic Goals

REGENERATE
1. **FARM ECOSYSTEM:** Implement Afro-indigenous agroforestry, silvopasture, wildcrafting, polyculture, regenerative, and ancestral farming practices on 80 acres of mountainside land, producing fruits, plant medicine, pasture-raised livestock, honey, mushrooms, cultural seeds, and vegetables. Maintain soil organic matter at ≥10% for carbon capture, perennial cover at 75% land area, max soil microbiome respiration rate on Solvita scale, and a 90%+ conservation score with USDA CSP.
2. **SOLIDARITY SHARES:** “Solidarity share” at least $25K of naturally-grown farm products to community members living under food apartheid through weekly doorstep delivery and BIPOC-centered organizational partnerships. Recipients report positive impacts on their health and household economies.
3. **FARM-TO-TABLE:** Provide 60% SFF farm-fresh ingredients for 1300+ culturally rich meals served to farmer trainees. Develop a SFF cookbook with northeast adapted heritage recipes. Distribute 1200+ units of herbal medicine and preserves through a replicable microenterprise.
4. **URBAN GARDENS:** Build 10+ new urban gardens and support 50+ built previously for intergenerational households in the Capital District through “Soul Fire in the City,” with supports including crop planning, technical assistance, follow up visits, and gatherings for gardeners, the majority of whom report a joyful and successful experience harvesting produce from their gardens and increased agency in food access.

EQUIP
1. **FARMER TRAINING:** Train 500+ BIPOC farmer-activists through our weeklong Farming Immersions and bilingual virtual and on-farm skill shares. At least 50% of graduates go on to work as growers, rural land stewards, and/or food system changemakers. Reach 5000+ growers through our “Liberation on Land” video series, highlighting Afro-Indigenous farming and land stewardship practices.
2. **COMMUNITY FARM EVENTS:** Inspire 600+ local youth and intergenerational community members to connect to the land, respect farmers, and advocate for food justice through daylong educational and work-and-learn programs on the farm, 75% of whom report taking subsequent action to heal the food system.
3. **FELLOWSHIP & ALUMNI SERVICES:** Support 11 existing and 10 new BIPOC beginning farmers in the 18-month “Braiding Seeds Fellowship,” providing a stipend, 1:1 mentorship, land finding services, media promotion, business planning, and networking opportunities to support their farm and land stewardship projects. Additionally, provide technical assistance to 100+ alumni and community partners, and engage 30+ alumni as members of our speakers collective.

MOBILIZE
1. **COALITIONS:** Collaborate regionally, nationally, and internationally with frontlines BIPOC-led coalitions (HEAL, NBFJA, Black Farmers NE Ecosystem) on campaigns to support farmworkers, rematriate land for indigenous people, advance reparations for Black farmers, and regenerate ecosystems.
2. **PUBLICATIONS & MEDIA:** With our sibling organizations, continue to author and update a nationally-recognized reference library of guides, articles, lists, rubrics, and manuals for food sovereignty. Reach 50,000+ people through publications, media interviews, Ask a Sista Farmer live show, Love Notes blog, and other virtual forums. Publish a new book *Black Earth Wisdom* with a target reach of 50K.
3. **UPROOTING RACISM & PUBLIC SPEAKING:** Catalyze the transfer of resources and power to BIPOC Farmers through powerful storytelling and deft facilitation, reaching 1000+ Uprooting Racism in the Food System participants and 8,000 attendees of public speaking events. At least 75% of registered participants report concrete actions toward food justice and land sovereignty as a result of what they learned.
SUSTAIN

1. **INFRASTRUCTURE:** Increase the efficiency, safety, and quality of life of staff and participants by completing the design process for the Program Center, Lodge, Office, and Abode. Buildings are designed to minimize impact on the environment in construction and use, and be durable for generations to come. Complete site wide planning with designated residential area, programming areas, lodging and public spaces, and campus solarization.

2. **WORK CULTURE:** Uplift radical self-care and healthy work culture with 33% salary step increase and 180% PTO increase from 2021. The size of the staff will increase to ~12 FTE shared among 14 positions. Staff consistently use benefits (QSEHRA, PTO) at rates higher than in 2021 and report greater than 90% satisfaction working at and feeling supported by SFF, as evidenced by professional development plans, consistent and regular 1:1s, Real Talks, timesheet reviews, and surveys.

3. **FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION:** Maintain the financial integrity of the organization through a 12-month operating reserve, diversified income stream with 50% of funding from non-grant sources, maintaining ethical standards to discern sources of our funding, and stewarding long-term relationships with donors through 100% on time reporting rate and personal outreach. Enhance the internal communications, data management, and operating procedures through a CRM, adopting Unified Chart of Accounts, updating Accounting Policies and Procedures, earning a “clean audit,” and increasing front office response rate to public inquiry.

4. **STRATEGIC PLAN:** Implement a staff and board approved 4-year strategic plan.