



IMPACT REPORT

2020-2021





Food System 6 Accelerator is on a mission to find the most promising innovators and impact-driven entrepreneurs working across the country and support them in transforming how we grow, produce, and distribute food.

Visionary donors like you make this happen.

OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

Food System 6 kicked off 2020 buzzing from the excitement of a major leadership transition - in late 2019, Caesaré Assad transitioned into the CEO position, as founders Renske Lynde and Peter Herz rolled onto the Board of Directors. In her new role, Caesaré has taken the critical learnings from our start-up years to inform a new dynamic, human-centered curriculum that helps under-represented entrepreneurs confront our rapidly changing food system and investment landscape.

As we all know too well, the months that ensued came with tumultuous highs and lows as the world was thrust into the Covid-19 pandemic. Having just kicked off our Cohort 5 programming, Food System 6 jumped in to support our entrepreneurs and guide our community through the challenges and opportunities that would present themselves in the months ahead. Although devastating, Covid-19 provided us an opportunity to validate a critical hypothesis - that the impact-driven entrepreneurs we support are building more equitable and more resilient alternatives to the current industrial food system. While the industry faced losses across the board, the FS6 portfolio was grappling with wildly increasing demand.

2020 marked many firsts for FS6, including a pivot to online programming. Since the start of 2020, our small team has run 3 successful cohorts and supported 21 impact-driven innovators from across the country who are implementing solutions that advance health, equity and sustainability in our communities. We have also utilized the broader access of online programming by producing 6 public-facing educational events, as well as a 3-part educational mini-series for our broader community.

Food System 6 is now poised to take our learnings, insights and expertise into 2021/2022 as we work with talented entrepreneurs from California to Georgia to build back our food system, stronger than ever. With the support from our committed and visionary donors, Food System 6 has developed one of the most unique business accelerators for sustainable agriculture and food system entrepreneurs - with a focus on supporting those who typically lack access to resources, knowledge and capital. We are grateful for our generous donors whose financial support has accelerated our vision for a sixth, restorative, and equitable food system for all.



TOWARDS A 6TH FOOD SYSTEM

We accelerate solutions that are making these impacts:



SUSTAINABLE ECOSYSTEMS

Local and regional agricultural and distribution practices that reduce waste, conserve land, support biodiversity and encourage regeneration.



HEALTHY PEOPLE

Programs, services and products that promote healthy, nutritious food, ensure the well-being of all people and connect communities to their food system.



VIBRANT FARMS

Economically-viable models that allow sustainable family farms to thrive, while caring for farmers, farm-workers and farm animals.



JUSTICE AND FAIRNESS

Entrepreneurial solutions and systems that increase equitable access to food, pay food and farm workers fairly, provide opportunities for wealth creation and ensure community food sovereignty.

OUR PORTFOLIO

50 **FOOD ENTERPRISES**
For-Profits, Non-profits, Cooperatives,
Alternative Entity Types.

2,000+ **INTERESTED APPLICANTS**
Robust national and global pipeline
of food system innovators.

\$30mil **INVESTED**
Blended capital raised from diverse
sources: philanthropic to venture.



BIPOC-LED or Serving
We prioritize innovators
historically left out of resource
and capital allocation.



Women
When on average only ~3% of
start-up founders are women.



Survival Rate
When on average 90%
of start-ups fail.



MEET THE COHORT



2020-2021

Our accelerator and custom coaching programming is designed to offer diverse, early-stage, food and agriculture entrepreneurs tactical business support and critical communication skills to help them scale their impact.

Even in the midst of a global pandemic, our team worked countless hours with three cohorts of amazing entrepreneurs, as we drilled down into each of their businesses and found creative ways to strengthen their strategies and ensure that fresh, healthy food was being grown, distributed and accessed in equitable, regenerative ways in their communities.

COHORT 5



Firebrand

Cohort 5 represented the ranchers, farmers, and makers that are the building blocks of a healthy and sustainable food system. It also marked the first year that Food System 6 secured a partnership with Investment Fund, 1st Course Capital, who provided eligible for-profit C5 companies with an optional \$25,000 SAFE note investment.



Preserving local meat markets by providing humane slaughter and butchery for small and mid-size ranchers.



Software that brings small sustainable farmers together for mutual success in the future food economy.



Using the craft of baking to create high-quality jobs and a thriving, engaged community.



KELLER CRAFTED

Supporting regional supply chains for regenerative family farms through whole-animal butchery, charcuterie, and distribution.



Up-cycling surplus vegetables into healthy, sustainable food products for food service.



Regeneratively producing food and fiber that respects people, animals, and the planet.

ENTREPRENEUR SPOTLIGHT

FARM GENERATIONS COOPERATIVE

Building trust, fairness, and stability for small, sustainable farmers through technology.



Farm Generations Coop is a farmer-owned software platform that enables small, direct-market farms to streamline administration and to access shared-market support. Their first app, GrownBy, brings farmers and consumers together, making and selling and shopping for local food simple while ensuring unparalleled fairness and equity for small and sustainable farmers and farmworkers.

"Thank you all for the help and support that you've provided over the last year -- it has been a positive lift in a crazy time and the company and product has been made much stronger as a result. You can see the FS6 influence everywhere."

—Lindsey Lusher Shote
Founder and CEO

ACCELERATING VIBRANT FARMS

1,000 Consumers and counting

380 Farms and counting



SUPPORT PROVIDED BY FS6

- Pitch Preparedness
- Design Support
- Investment Readiness
- Go To Market Strategy
- HR + Team Development
- Media Production

COHORT 6



Rhizoform

Huhtamaki

In 2020, in the midst of COVID-19, we successfully collaborated with Huhtamaki: Sustainable Food Packaging Solutions to run our first ever, corporate-sponsored international "Circular Economy" accelerator program.

The purpose of this program was to support the development of young and promising companies reducing waste by designing circular solutions that ensure a better, more sustainable future



Harnessing the power of fungi to "grow" a bio-based alternative to plastic thermal food coolers, food service packaging, and more



Re-envisioning & rebuilding food and land cooperative ecosystems through the transformational leadership of QTBIPOC young folx.



Converting organic waste into renewable chemicals and biodegradable materials.



Transforming household waste into a valuable resource through collection, composting, up-cycling, and education in Burundi.



EcoPulping turns agricultural waste into raw material for low-carbon, non-plastic packaging and paper.



Creating biodegradable seaweed-based packaging that extends shelf-life of fresh food and reduces plastic waste.



Harnessing the power of microbes to increase the crop yield, nitrogen capture, and carbon sequestration of plants.



Up-cycling vegetable surplus to feed people and protect nature.

ENTREPRENEUR SPOTLIGHT

MARIARK FOODS

Fresh farm surplus turned into nutritious meals



Matriark Foods works with farmers and aggregators to make use of the 12 million tons of perfectly usable vegetables that go to waste in the field or are sent to the landfill each year. They upcycle this produce into healthy, delicious, products for food service in order to divert waste streams at a disruptive scale, feed large numbers of people, and build a better food system.

"FS6 team support, feedback, and facilitating, the most amazing high level deep digging made us better at telling our story in the most possible impactful way."

—Anna Hammond
Founder and CEO

ACCELERATING HEALTH

1,000,000 Pounds food wasted diverted annually

500,000 Healthy meals served annually



SUPPORT PROVIDED BY FS6

- Pitch Preparedness
- Design Support
- Industry Connections + Mentorship
- Media Production
- 15k Pass-Through Funding

COHORT 7

Cohort 7 represents the unique landscape of 2020 and the entrepreneurs who stepped up to support their communities through the challenges of Covid-19. C7 reflects a strong place-based, community-focused approach as these innovators tackled the issues of regional resiliency, community food security, and inclusive business solutions that arose from the past year.



Kitchen 66



Redistributing surplus food to seniors and the food insecure in Atlanta, GA.



Training and deploying regenerative poultry farmers at scale.



The open-source tractor solution for today's small sustainable market farms.



Decreasing barriers for Tulsa's food entrepreneurs through business training and operational support.



Connecting people across cultures and experiences through the warmth of Arab bread and hospitality.



Gleaning fruits & vegetables that would otherwise go to waste and sharing it with food-insecure families across Sonoma County.



An open-source, virtual market platform for transparent local food systems.



Transforming agricultural waste into paper pulp for packaging through EcoPulping.



Supporting the next generation of sustainable farmers to build a more resilient and prosperous Ferry County, WA.

ENTREPRENEUR SPOTLIGHT

REEM'S

Connecting people across cultures and through the warmth of Arab hospitality.



Reem's California is an Arab street corner bakery and restaurant with two locations in the Bay Area. They connect people across cultures and experiences through the warmth of Arab bread and hospitality. The Reem's vision is to build a strong resilient community with good jobs, nourishing food, and a sense of home for all.

"I have... been so inspired by the conviction, perspective, and ingenuity each of you [C7] takes in your approach transforming our food system to create a more sustainable future for all of us. I have learned so much from all of you, appreciate the thoughtful feedback you've shared with me, and cherish the laughter and moments of vulnerability we've shared together."

—Zaynah Hindi
Markets and Events Coordinator

ACCELERATING JUSTICE


24 Future Employee-owners

2 Restaurant locations



SUPPORT PROVIDED BY FS6

- Pitch Preparedness
- Design Support
- Leadership Development
- Fundraising & Valuation Advice
- Sales Strategy
- Consultant Referrals



FS6 challenged me to grow outside of my comfort level and... gave me the tools to tell our story beautifully. Because of our practice together, I can now quickly, easily and, precisely talk about what we do.

— Jacqueline Smith
Central Grazing Company, Cohort 5

We gained invaluable skills in honing our Theory of Change and our innovation pitch. However, the most impactful takeaway has been all our new and incredible relationships we have gained through the program!

—Teia Evans
Cofed, Cohort 6

Thanks for the incredibly amazing resources you are all bringing into this cohort process. I feel so privileged from having access to this opportunity.

— Reginaldo Haslett-Marroquin
Regenerative Poultry Systems, Cohort 7



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YOUR SUPPORT



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