

2025/2026

Local Roots Market & Café

ANNUAL REPORT

locally rooted • regionally connected • globally inspired

01

BY THE NUMBERS

	2025/2026	2024/2025	% to Prior Year
Total Gross Sales Receipts	**$2,469,542**	$2,267,020	9%
Returned to Consignment Producers	**$1,219,965**	$1,195,507	2%
Net Income	**$130,413** Pending year-end depreciation expense	$70,057	86%
Cooperative Members	**3,449**	3,316	4%
New Member Sign-Ups	**133**	157	-15%
Membership Renewals	**726**	855	-15%
Active Producers	**203**	217	-6%
Employees	**19**	22	-14%



OUR ROOTS RUN DEEP: CELEBRATING OUR ORIGINAL PRODUCERS

We would like to take a moment to recognize and celebrate the producers who have been part of our journey since the very beginning.

For 17 years, these dedicated local farmers, artisans, and small business owners have been growing, creating, baking, and crafting the products that fill our shelves. Their hard work and passion are at the heart of what makes Local Roots so special. From their farms, kitchens, studios and workshops to our shelves, their products travel just a short distance before finding their way into the homes of our community members.

We are incredibly grateful for their continued partnership, loyalty, and commitment to keeping our local food and artisan economy thriving. Thank you for believing in Local Roots from day one and for helping shape the community we are today!



A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR LONGTIME PRODUCERS:

- Adonai Acres
- Autumn Harvest
- Betsy's Bake Shop
- Boii Gardens
- Broken Rocks Café & Bakery
- Colibri Studio
- Gortner Maple Syrup
- Herberger Blueberries
- HomeKare Farm
- LinJ Pottery
- Miller's Creamery
- Moonstruck Farm
- Moreland Fruit Farm
- Schmidt Family Farm
- Simply Gourmet Syrups
- Shepherd's Market
- Tea Hills Farm
- Terrascape



03

COMMERCIAL KITCHEN

KITCHEN BY THE NUMBERS

Kitchen and Storage Rent Collected:	$28,038
Number of Active Renters	26
Café Kitchen Sales	$488,059
Café Resell Sales	$98,844
Catering Sales	$79,317

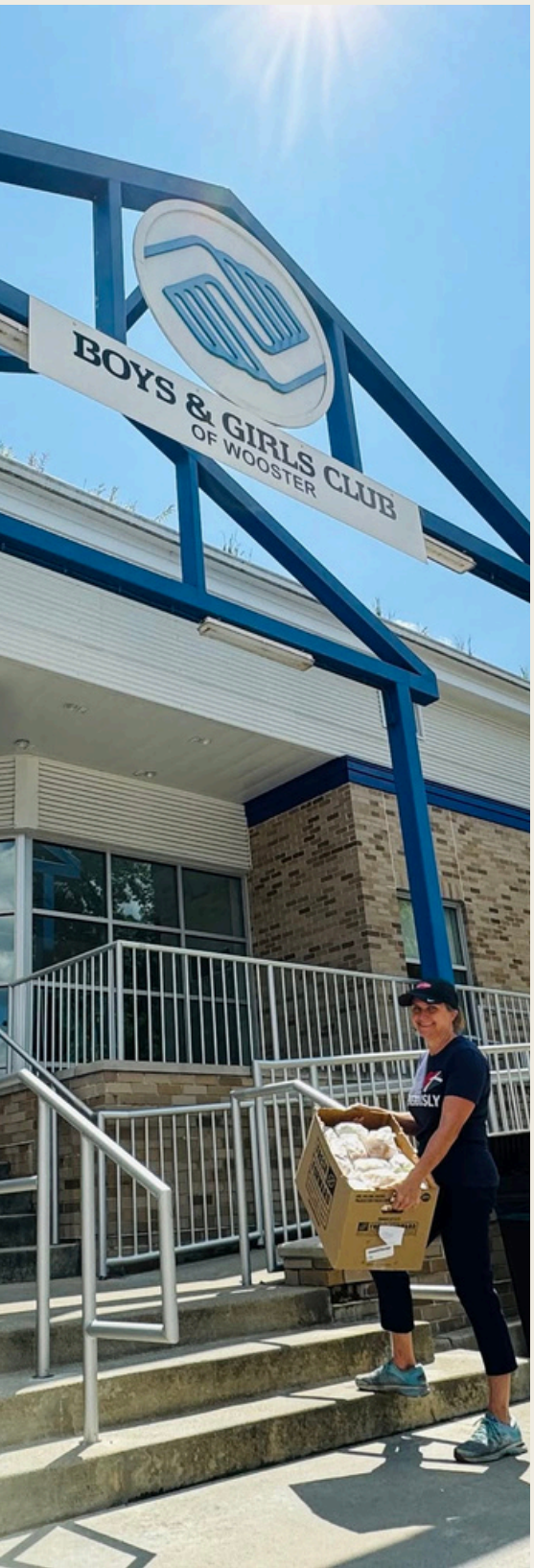


NEW ACCOUNTS

Local Roots Kitchen began selling items at the Wooster Community Hospital's Breakaway Café in April and also The Lyric Theater in May. We provide weekly items to both locations and are proud to be serving the greater Wooster area.



COMMERCIAL KITCHEN



BOYS & GIRLS CLUB

We are continuing to serve The Boys & Girls Club of Wooster. **During the 2025-2026 school year, we served more than 10,000 meals.** We also provided snacks for 115 campers during the summer of 2026.

THE FOOD CORRIDOR

The commercial kitchen started using *The Food Corridor*, a software platform designed specifically for kitchens such as ours to automate scheduling, booking, and invoicing. Another benefit of The Food Corridor is that Local Roots is now listed on The Kitchen Door, an online search engine and directory that connects food entrepreneurs, chefs, bakers, caterers, and food truck operators with licensed commercial and commissary kitchens available for rent. **Since being on this platform, we have had 13 new inquiries, 5 of which became active renters**.

05

EVENTS & HAPPENINGS





HOLIDAY BAZAAR ‘25

Our Annual Holiday Bazaar was held for the second year in a row in our new building across the street on 12/20/25. It was yet again a wonderful celebration of community and local makers, creators, and farmers. We also welcomed vendors and visitors to our current market. These spaces were filled with energy as visitors met with producers, discovered thoughtful handmade gifts, and enjoyed the festive atmosphere that makes this event such a highlight of the season.

We are excited to report that on this day, our producers saw the busiest day of sales EVER for Local Roots. We’re incredibly grateful to the producers who brought their talents and goods, our local musicians for bringing holiday melodies, Santa Claus for making his way from the North Pole (thank you Todd Patterson!), and to our staff and volunteers for all the hard work they put in during the event and leading up to the day. We are thankful to our community for showing up to celebrate with us, from familiar faces to first-time visitors, who came to support our vibrant, local small business economy.

Events like the Holiday Bazaar remind us how special it is to gather in this way, creating moments of connection and joy.





WAYNE WINTER HIKING CHALLENGE ’26

Each winter, in collaboration with Emily Speelman from *Through the Woods*, Local Roots likes to help promote movement and wellness for ourselves and our community with our annual hiking challenge. We continued the tradition in ‘26 and over 100 hikers joined us on the winter trail. What started as a way to stay connected with others during the isolation of the pandemic, the Hiking Challenge continues to inspire others to keep moving their bodies outside during colder winter months.





ELECTRIC CAR SHOW ‘26

In collaboration with Drive Electric Earth Month (DEEM), we were pleased to host our 8th annual Electric Car Show this past spring. We saw a variety of vendors, some attending from across the state, and 77 vehicles drove in for the event from far and wide. It was our largest showing to date and the largest DEEM event in Ohio for the year! In addition to electric cars, trucks and SUVs, we saw e-bikes, a motorcycle, and brand-new electric lawn equipment from EGO Power thanks to E&H Hardware. And for the first time ever, we hosted test drives from Tesla. Tesla shared with us a variety of models to put participants in the driver's seat for a full self-driving experience. Thank you to all who attended, to Creperie Savoie & Big D's Soul-B-Q for feeding us well, and to our DEEM Team: Ryan Leeper, Kevin Wall, Brodie DeHass, Kate Frichtl, and Annie Yoder.



07

EVENTS & HAPPENINGS



JUNE MEMBER APPRECIATION MONTH ‘26

Thank you to everyone who helped make June Member Appreciation Month a success! During June, we sold 252 memberships, an increase of 59 from the previous year. Each Saturday during the month, producers joined us for our “Meet the Makers” series to offer samples, connect with customers, and create a lively market atmosphere. New Local Roots pens, stickers, and a membership brochure gave us additional tools to promote membership and better communicate how member support strengthens our market, our producers, and the Local Roots community. Carrying on a fun tradition, Betsy Anderson kicked off the month by serving slices of her homemade carrot cake.



CLASSES

Co-op member perks include discounts on specialty classes throughout the year. This year we saw classes like *Wreath Making* with Traci Van Keuren of Sycamore Hollow Tree Farm, *Seed Saving* with Mary Gnizak of Adonai Acres, and *Pottery Carving* with Rhiannon Diehl of Rhino Pottery. We were pleased to see a great turnout to all of these events, with pottery carving bringing in our highest class attendance to date with 39 participants, set up in our new building across the street.



POP-UPS

Throughout the year, we host pop-up lunches and dinners for special events and collaborations. This year, we welcomed Michael Ollier of Creperie Savoie for several pop-ups and hosted a Kôkôdy West African Pop-Up Dinner led by international students from The College of Wooster. The Kôkôdy dinner drew our biggest evening crowd to date, filling the market with incredible food, conversation, and community. We’re so grateful to the students who shared a taste of home and created such a memorable night for Wooster.

EVENTS & HAPPENINGS



FLOWER SUBSCRIPTION

The flower subscription kicked off its second season just in time for Mother's Day this year, and we expanded our network to five local growers. Curating blossoms for a 20-week season, the subscription was a full month longer than last year's, with even more customers enrolled. Each Thursday brought a new selection of beautiful, locally grown bouquets and a chance to see the unique style and creativity of each grower.



STAPLES FOOD SUBSCRIPTION

Launched in 2024, our ongoing food subscription, *The Staples*, is still going strong! Each week, participants receive a curated selection of essential grocery items from rotating producers and companies, all in alignment with the Local Roots mission including a fresh loaf of bread, local greens and eggs, and a surprise seasonal or specialty item.



SEASONAL EATS CSF

Our *2026 Seasonal Eats CSF* (Community Supported Foods) connected subscribers with local, seasonal foods, recipes, and first access to market favorites. Bi-weekly shares featured produce from a variety of local farmers, including unique items not always available on our regular market shelves. It was especially fun to welcome back many subscribers from last summer, and even a few who have been with us for three seasons! This year, we offered a 100% vegetarian share and accommodated individual food allergies and preferences. The CSF is a fun way to introduce customers to foods they may not otherwise try, along with recipe inspiration to help them make the most of each share.



HOLIDAY GIFT BOXES

We will once again offer Holiday Gift Boxes for the 2026 season! This year's curation will include locally made artisan items, including hand-poured candles, pottery, and more, a lovely way to highlight local makers and make gifting local even easier over the holiday season.

09 A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

GINA BERTELLI OF ANDIO SISTERS & HEY CHICKY



We would like to take a moment to recognize and congratulate Gina Bertelli as she takes the next step toward opening her very own brick-and-mortar location later this year!

We've so enjoyed watching Gina's entrepreneurial ventures - Andio Sisters and Hey Chicky - grow over the past four years. Now, as Gina continues another busy food truck season and construction moves along on her new downtown brunch and lunch spot, let's take a walk down memory lane and share a little bit about Gina's journey.

Andio Sisters, based out of Local Roots' commercial kitchen, was founded by Gina Bertelli in 2022. Building on more than 25 years of experience in the culinary industry, Gina serves up a blend of Italian-inspired and classic, all-around-tasty eats with a small team that includes talented pastry chef, Emma Lenart. Andio Sisters has become a popular source for catered goods and special events in Wooster, to-go eats in our prepared food case, and, until this past spring, Monday lunch service out of our café commercial kitchen.

Gina was born and raised in Northeast Ohio and grew up on the Italian staples of food, family, and laughter. Her background and these qualities continue to inspire her work. With a desire for big-city life, she graduated from the Cooking and Hospitality Institute of Chicago and never looked back. Working in restaurants in cities including Chicago, New Orleans, Philadelphia, Las Vegas, and Minneapolis equipped Gina with the experience and knowledge needed to create memorable dining experiences for her customers.

Gina's business name was inspired by her mother and aunts. Together, they are the *Andio Sisters*. She says, "Each one of them has played a special role in how I cook!"

One of her favorite catered offerings to create is her grazing tables. She noted, "From the prep to the finished display, everything is perfectly thought out and made to look gorgeous. It's colorful and offers so much variety, and everything tastes so good. It's not your average meat and cheese tray."



MEMORIES, GROWTH, & WHAT'S AHEAD



Last year, Gina expanded her culinary talents with a food truck venture called *Hey Chicky!* Hey Chicky serves up delicious chicken sandwiches, tender baskets, fries, and more alongside signature sauces. A passionate animal lover and proud dog mom to six pups and one cat named Karen, she makes sure four-legged visitors are taken care of too. Dogs always eat free at the food truck! The idea for Hey Chicky first came to Gina during the pandemic. With more time at home to brainstorm, the concept began to take shape and quickly became a dream she hoped to pursue. Five years later, she brought that dream to life.

Hey Chicky continues to stay busy during the warmer months, showing up at local events throughout Wayne County. Keep an eye on Gina's social media accounts for updates on both Andio Sisters and Hey Chicky. And if you'd like to enjoy Gina's variety of eats at your next event, feel free to reach out to her at *andiosisters@gmail.com* to inquire.

A NOTE FROM GINA

"I started this business from nothing, and if it wasn't for Local Roots, I wouldn't be where I am today. Local Roots provided a place for me to share my business, and I've made lifelong friendships with people that have the same passion as me here. Not only did this place provide opportunity for me, but I got to mentor people too. I love and enjoy David and have so enjoyed watching him evolve and grow. There's not too many people who have done what he does. He has the passion to grow and evolve his business. To see where he was on his first day to where he is now is awesome and fun to watch.

Local Roots also provided the opportunity to sell my product. The ability to serve my lunch and sell food out of the cooler helped me make money from the get-go. That really skyrocketed my career. Then other people saw that, wanted to carry my food, and now we sell out of to-go cases at six other places. Don't sleep on this opportunity, if you have a passion and a fire in you, Local Roots is a gem. I have never seen anything like it and I have lived all over the country. You have to work for it, don't get me wrong, but it is a career launcher if you want to make a life out of it and put in the work too."

GINA'S NEW LOCATION, COMING SOON!

Gina's new space will focus on the Hey Chicky concept with additional offerings. There will be a fully stocked grab-and-go cooler with catering provided out of the new location kitchen. The restaurant will be named after Hey Chicky with a quick-service focus. The plan is to provide brunch on Saturdays and Sundays featuring signature flavors, fun snacks, and inclusive, vegan and gluten-free options as well.

While we'll certainly miss having Gina and Andio Sisters based out of our kitchen, we can't wait to see what is in store for her in this next chapter!



OUR COMMERCIAL KITCHEN - TO START, GROW, AND THRIVE

Gina's story is also a wonderful example of the important role the Local Roots commercial kitchen plays in supporting small food businesses in our community. By providing access to an affordable, licensed commercial kitchen, Local Roots gave Gina the opportunity to start her business with significantly less financial risk and grow at a pace that worked for her. Over the years, our kitchen has served as a small business incubator for many startup food entrepreneurs and chefs who may not otherwise have had the resources to take that first step.

This kind of shared commercial kitchen model is especially valuable in a small community like ours. When we provide local entrepreneurs the space and resources to get started, that investment can have a ripple effect throughout our local economy. Gina's journey from launching Andio Sisters in the Local Roots kitchen to preparing to open her own downtown restaurant is a perfect example of that impact.

As we continue to raise funds for our capital campaign, it is important to recognize that the commercial kitchen is much more than a place to prepare food. It is a resource that helps turn ideas into businesses, gives local entrepreneurs a place to begin and grow, and ultimately contributes to a stronger and more vibrant downtown community.

COMMUNITY KITCHEN













PHOTOS BY TINA KNIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY

NEW BUILDING UPDATE

CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS & PLANS

We continue to forge ahead toward our dream of expansion! Following a strategic pause in construction in 2025, this past year brought important milestones, thoughtful planning, and meaningful progress toward securing Local Roots' future.

One of the year's most significant developments was securing a new lease with Wayne County, ensuring continued occupancy of our original home at 140 S. Walnut Street. This allows us to preserve a space central to Local Roots' history while significantly reducing the scope and cost of renovations at 146 W. South Street.

With a two-building campus now guiding our vision, we revisited our expansion plans. Led by architect and Local Roots board member Bob Toot, the updated design makes efficient use of existing building features and aligns with the approximately $1 million in federal grant funding that is both secured and earmarked for market renovations. Plans for 146 W. South Street include a fully renovated market, Boo Bears Brew, and Ride On Bicycles, creating a vibrant destination for local commerce and community connection. Meanwhile, plans for a new commercial kitchen have shifted to a future phase, allowing kitchen operations to both continue and expand at their existing location on Walnut Street.

While design work progressed, construction continued wherever possible. In 2026, we completed a new roof, roof drains, associated excavation and plumbing work, and extensive interior demolition. These improvements mark significant progress and provide a clean slate for the next phase of renovations.

By October 2026, architectural plans were complete and submitted to the building department, with Vince Mariola Construction LTD preparing the project for competitive subcontractor bidding. Looking ahead to 2027, years of planning, perseverance, and community support have brought us closer than ever to realizing our shared vision. We're deeply grateful to the members, producers, partners, and supporters who continue to make this progress possible.



CAPITAL CAMPAIGN



A NOTE TO OUR PATRONS & SUPPORTERS

As we look ahead to 2027, our capital campaign will be more important than ever. With one final, collective push, we can cross the finish line together!

With updated architectural plans complete and construction bidding underway, we are approaching a major milestone: establishing a firm, final project budget with a clear path toward completion. With just over $1 million in secured federal grant funding and available cash, we have a strong financial foundation already in place. Current estimates place the remaining construction costs at approximately $1.6 million. Although this number will change with the formal bids coming soon, it does give us a clear direction, and we know that ***additional community support will be essential to close the funding gap and bring our vision to life.***

After five years of planning, fundraising, and perseverance, we are closer than ever to making this dream a reality. One final, collective push can carry us across the finish line. To our members, producers, donors, and community partners: we've come this far together. Let's finish what we started!

Help Us Cross the Finish Line

Donations to our Capital Campaign can be made through the Wayne County Community Foundation

scan to donate



Local Roots Market & Café

Current Board Members

Libbie Buehler
Seth Feikert
Matthew Mullet
Mark Pirogowicz
Zac Rheinberger
Robb Stutzman
Bob Toot
Seth Walker

Outgoing Board Member

Rachel Relle
Thank you so much to Rachel for her years of service to Local Roots!

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