



Kitchen Table
ADVISORS

2013 CELEBRATING 10 YEARS 2023

Kitchen Table
ADVISORS

2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Dear KTA Community,

Ten years ago, Kitchen Table Advisors was seeded by an observation that small sustainable farmers and ranchers lead businesses with unique needs and contributions to our communities. Knowing how essential they are to our collective livelihoods, our Founding Executive Director, Anthony Chang, identified the importance of aligning support with the distinct opportunities and challenges they experience. This inspired Anthony to create an organization that brought together people and resources to help regional farms and ranches reach and sustain economic viability.

What was as true then, as it is now, is that farmers and ranchers are not only leaders of their businesses, but, more broadly, our regional food communities. How they connect and care for people and the natural world forms the foundation of our shared humanity. Over KTA's 10 years, our organizational direction has always been integrally drawn from the voices and visions of our farmer and rancher clients.

What also continues to resonate for us is that the work of rebuilding our food system is grounded in the collaborative and generative spaces of community. KTA is part of a larger ecosystem of farmers and ranchers, chefs and food producers, programmatic partners, and supporters. Arriving at this organizational milestone of 10 years is by no means ours to commemorate alone. To each of you, we are deeply grateful to be co-creating a food system centering farmers' identities, perspectives, and needs.

With this ethos guiding us, we've looked to our shared learnings and relationships over the years to shape each turn in our organization's journey. This report offers a window into our history: the milestones we've marked, the programs we've launched and evolved, and the impact we're continuing to define and assess. Even more, the report invites you deeper into our client community as we share stories of how the change and innovation these farmers and ranchers are leading at a farm level ripple into our larger foodshed.

Join us in reflecting and celebrating. We look forward to weaving together your learnings and insights with our own in support of a farmer-led food system based in community, justice, and ecological responsibility.

In community,

Angie, Anne, Carine, David, Erika, Favio, Federica, Gianna, H, James, Justin, Laura, Lauren, Lily, Liz, Maclovia, Maria, Marilyn, Paige, Pei-Yee, Sarah, Soraya, Sumi, Tania, Thomas & Wendy

Kitchen Table Advisors

Note: In our efforts to develop our program evaluation, you'll see new data points represented as well as additional context around certain metrics in the report. This stems from our commitment to providing a deeper understanding of our clients businesses' such that you can recognize the needs, challenges, and opportunities that exist and how they have influenced our programmatic work.



10 Years of KTA

Milestones throughout Kitchen Table Advisors' 10 years are not only found in significant moments of transition or achievement. Rather, we choose to celebrate what we encounter and realize in our everyday work: nurturing a relationship with a farmer or rancher during a field walk, convening regional networks of clients, or coming together in staff meetings to problem solve and envision a new approach. The milestones reflected here are the culmination of countless everyday moments shared among our community of clients, staff, programmatic partners, and supporters.

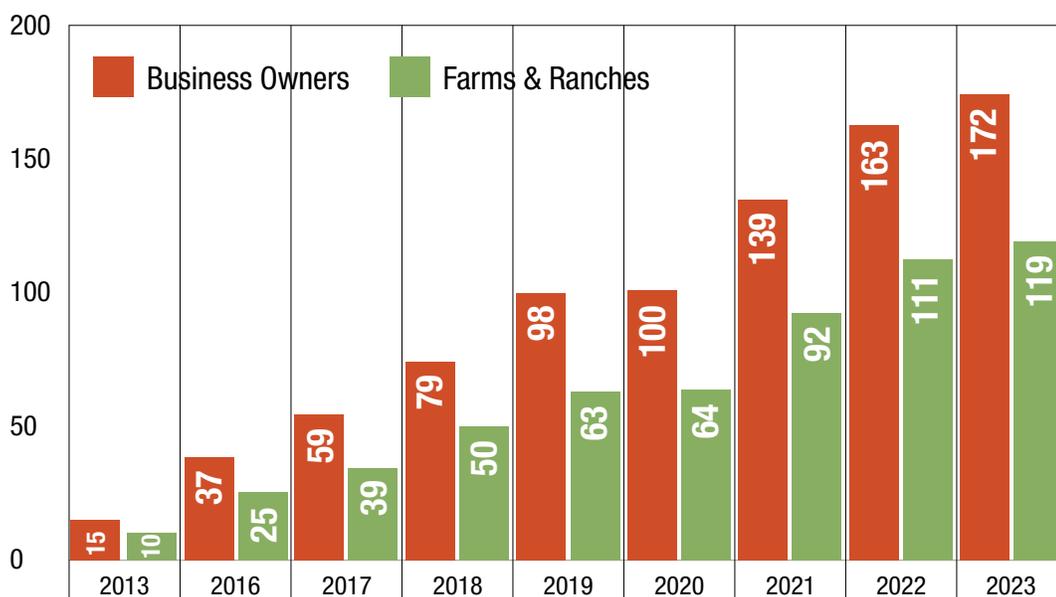
KTA Organizational Milestones

- Evolved our organizational structure to a distributed leadership model grounded in democratic decision-making
- Grew our team from three in 2013 to 26 in 2023
- Added Ecosystem Building, People & Culture, Operations, and Communications departments to support the growth, stability, and impact of our organization

KTA Program Milestones

- A total of 172 business owners across 119 farm and ranch businesses supported within our 1:1 business advising program during our 10 years
- Implemented a regional program model with program staff based in the communities we serve across Northern and Central California
- Developed seven interrelated primary learning areas that serve as a guiding framework in how we engage with clients through our 1:1 business advising program
- Launched our second core program, Ecosystem Building, and have led or contributed to 26 projects within the regions we support over the last five years
- Co-created partner organizations, Manzanita Capital Collective and The People's Land Fund, which emerged in response to the capital needs of BIPOC producers

Farm & Ranch Businesses Advised by KTA Over 10 Years



KTA went from serving 10 farm and ranch businesses led by 15 owners in 2013 to a total of 119 farm and ranch businesses led by 172 owners over 10 years. Today, KTA is supporting 95 active and alumni* farm and ranch businesses led by 147 owners across 17 counties in Northern and Central California.

**KTA defines "active" clients as farm and ranch businesses in their first three years of engagement in our 1:1 business advising program. Our clients become "alumni" at the start of their fourth year in our advising program.*

A Community of Leaders & Stewards

We are truly honored to have spent the past several years cultivating relationships with and witnessing the individual evolutions of many small sustainable producers. The following list of KTA clients is not inclusive of every client we've ever supported, nor is every client in the list still active as some have closed, retired, sold their businesses, moved, or transitioned to other pursuits and callings. Regardless of whether they are still farming or not, we are grateful that our paths brought us together with each client, and recognize the multitude of ways they are transforming our regional food communities.



Fiery Ginger Farm. PC: Paige Green

Gerardo Acevedo, **Acevedo Organic Farm** | Salinas
Anna Torres, **Anna's Organic Farm** | Chowchilla
Antonio Reyes, **Antonio and Sons Farm** | Pescadero
Martín Aviña, **Aviña Organic Farms** | Salinas
Martin Barraza, **Barraza Farms** | Salinas
Cindy Gause, **Bella Vida Farm** | Elk Grove
Moretta Browne & Marianne Olney Hamel, **Berkeley Basket CSA** | Berkeley
Caymin Ackerman, **Big Mesa Farm** | Comptche
Ryan Casey, **Blue House Farm** | Pescadero
Joanna Letz, **Bluma Farm** | Berkeley
Marshall McLaughlin, **Bosquero Farm** | Rumsey
Scott Kelley & Aubrie Maze, **Bramble Tail Homestead** | Penngrove
Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou, Verónica Mazariegos-Anastassiou & Cristóbal Cruz Hernández, **Brisa Ranch** | Pescadero
Rigo Bucio, **Bucio Organic Farm** | Salinas
Victor Manuel Martinez, **Buena Vista Organics** | Watsonville

Maria Catalán, **Catalán Family Farm** | Hollister
Misael Morales, **Chelito Organic Farms** | Watsonville
Adelio Coronel, **Coronel Produce Organic Farm** | Salinas
Carlos Daniel De Jesús, **Coyo Organic Farm** | Salinas
Teodora, Melecio & Javier Cruz, **Cruz Martinez Farm** | Chowchilla
Li Schmidt, **Cultural Roots Nursery** | Winters
Kelly Brown, **Do Right Flower Farm** | Davenport
Emilio Otontiopa, **Doyse Farm** | Watsonville
Isabel Rosas, **Dream Farm** | Salinas
Eduardo Salazar, **E & E Farm** | Madera
Juan & Raul Murillo, **El Zenzontle Organic Farms** | Salinas
Jonathan Nuñez, **Esquivel Farm** | Gilroy
Mai Nguyen, **Farmer Mai** | Sebastopol
Kanoa Dinwoodie, **Feral Heart Farm** | Sunol
Hope Sippola & Shayne Zurilgen, **Fiery Ginger Farm** | West Sacramento
Teresa Kurtak, Mike Irving & John Vars, **Fifth Crow Farm** | Pescadero
Kaeleigh Carrier & Airielle Love, **Fly Girl Farm** | Pescadero
Caleb Barron, **Fogline Farm** | Año Nuevo
Jesús & David Alvarado, **Fresalva Berry LLC** | Salinas

Andres Gomez, **Gomez Farm** | Vacaville
Mauricio Gonzales, **Gonzales Huerta Organics** | Salinas
Rudy Jimenez, **Green Thumb Farms** | Salinas
Anna Erickson, **Hands Full Farm** | Valley Ford
Helena & Matthew Sylvester, **Happy Acre Farm** | Sunol
Janet Nagamine, **Hikari Farms** | Watsonville
Celsa Ortega, **Induchucuiti Organic Farm** | Salinas
Maria Morales, **JM Farmers Organic** | Salinas
José Magaña, **JM&M Farms** | Hollister
Javier Zamora, **JSM Organics** | Watsonville
Jenny & Vince Trotter, **Kibo Farm** | Santa Rosa
Zee Husain, **Kula Nursery** | Oakland
Ignacio (Nacho) Romero, **Laguna Farm** | Sebastopol
Gloria Chavez, **Las Hermanas CC Produce** | Hollister
Rachel Kohn Obut, **Little Moon Farm** | Napa
Molly Myerson, **Little Wing Farm** | Point Reyes Station
Will Holloway, **Longer Table Farm** | Sebastopol
Jesús Calzadillas, **Los Pinos Organic** | San Juan Bautista
Gaby Lee, **Lunaria Flower Farm** | Pescadero
Bertha Magaña, **Magaña Farm** | Watsonville
Jesse & Moira Kuhn, **Marin Roots Farm** | Petaluma
Seth Nitschke, **Mariposa Ranch** | Newman
Eric & Doniga Markegard, **Markegard Family Grass-Fed**
| San Gregorio
Israel Martinez Perez, **Martinez Organics Farm** | Gilroy
Sarah McGinnis, **McGinnis Ranch** | Watsonville
Monica Drazba, **Midsummer Flowers LLC** | Vacaville
Domitila Tapia, **Mimi's Organic Farm** | Watsonville
Ge Moua, **Moua Farm** | Elverta
Kristyn Leach, **Namu Farm** | Winters
María Ana Reyes, **Narci Organic Farm** | Salinas
Maria Narez, **Narez Organic Produce** | Salinas
Adam Davidoff & Ryan Power, **New Family Farm** |
Sebastopol
Roberto Gaytan, **Oaxax Organics** | Salinas
Marsha Habib, **Oya Organics** | Hollister
Kelly Osman, **Oz Family Farm** | Valley Ford
Shannon Waldron & Christian Cain, **Perennial Grazing** |
Rumsey
Maria "Nancy" Nuñez, **Picoso Farm** | Gilroy

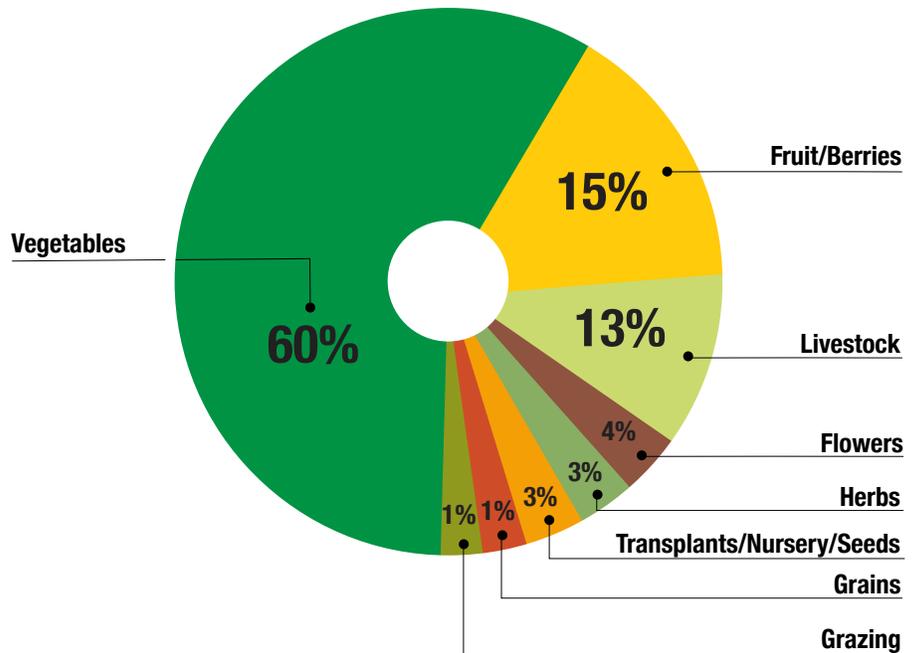
José Ramirez, **R&R Fresh Farms** | Pescadero
Leslie Wiser, **Radical Family Farms** | Sebastopol
Lauren McNees & Lee Millon, **Rainwater Ranch** | Winters
Rigoberto & Juvenal Cruz, **Rancho Las Palmas** |
Davenport
Caiti Hachmyer, **Red H Farm** | Sebastopol
Rafael Garcia, **RHJ Organics** | Royal Oaks
David Robles, **Robles Transplant** | Watsonville
Cecilia Rojas, **Rojas Tepetitla Organic Farms** | Salinas
Dede Boies, **Root Down Farm** | Pescadero
Alejandro Salazar, **Salazar Organic Farms** | Watsonville
Chris Laughlin, **Sea to Sky Farm** | Santa Cruz
Scott Chang-Fleeman, **Shao Shan Farm** | Sebastopol
Luis Silva, **Silva Organic Farm** | Watsonville
Alexis & Gillies Robertson, **Skyelark Ranch** | Edgewood
Kaley Grimland & Edgar Mendoza, **Sol Seeker Farm** | Tres
Pinos
Everardo & Roberto Solorio, **Solorio's Organic Farm** | San
Juan Bautista & Watsonville
Sam, Mike & Nick Thorp, **Spade & Plow Organics** | Gilroy
Michael Smith, Cathy Suematsu, Brent Levin & Liz
Schroeder, **Spreadwing Farm** | Rumsey
Finn Oakes & Lauren Anderson, **Steadfast Herbs** |
Pescadero
Koy Saichow, **Stony Point Strawberry Farm** | Petaluma
Carine & Robert Hines, **Sun Tracker Farm** | Guinda
Gladys Mondragon, **Sunshine Organics** | Watsonville
Benjamin Fahrer, **Top Leaf Farms** | Berkeley
Carlos González Torres, **Torres Organic Farm** | Salinas
Malkeet Padda, **Tru2Earth Farm** | Gilroy
Guido Frosini, **True Grass Farms** | Valley Ford
Latsamee Moua, **Vang Farmers** | Merced
Emiliano Gómez Vásquez, **Vásquez Organic Farms** |
Hollister
Rufino Ventura, **Ventura Organic Farms** | Hollister
Nelson Hawkins, **We Grow Urban Farm** | West
Sacramento
David & Kayta Plescia, **West County Community Farm** |
Sebastopol
Tiffany Holbrook, **Wise Acre Farm** | Windsor
Judith & Chanowk Yisrael, **Yisrael Family Urban Farm** |
Sacramento

A Deeper Look At Our Clients

As small sustainable farmers and ranchers, our clients reflect ecological stewards, community leaders, social justice activists, local agriculture advocates, and more. Their contributions to our regional foodshed are as expansive and diverse as their lived experiences, identities, and the natural landscapes they tend. Alongside fostering the nourishment and wellbeing of people and ecosystems, our clients provide for the livelihoods of individuals in their communities via job creation, peer mentorship, mutual aid support, contributions to food access programs, board and advisory committee roles, farm-to-school programs, and more.

The following information about our clients reflect 2013-2022 aggregated data for all clients participating in our 1:1 advising program who have responded to our annual business assessment. In sharing these metrics and stories, we hope to connect you with the successes our clients defined and realized as well as the barriers and needs that remain.

Primary Operation Type of Client*



**This information was initially collected at the time clients joined our advising program and is revisited annually with clients, but the focus of operations may transition over time. Primary operation type is assessed based on a client's majority of sales.*

In 2022...

- KTA clients stewarded **14,235 acres of land** based on last reported data
- **96.2% of clients** actively use practices that can reduce adverse agricultural impacts on the ecosystem
 - Client self-reported practices include cover cropping, native hedgerow planting, utilizing irrigation systems that conserve water, crop rotation, composting, supporting pollinator and animal habitats, hand weeding, seed saving, and more.

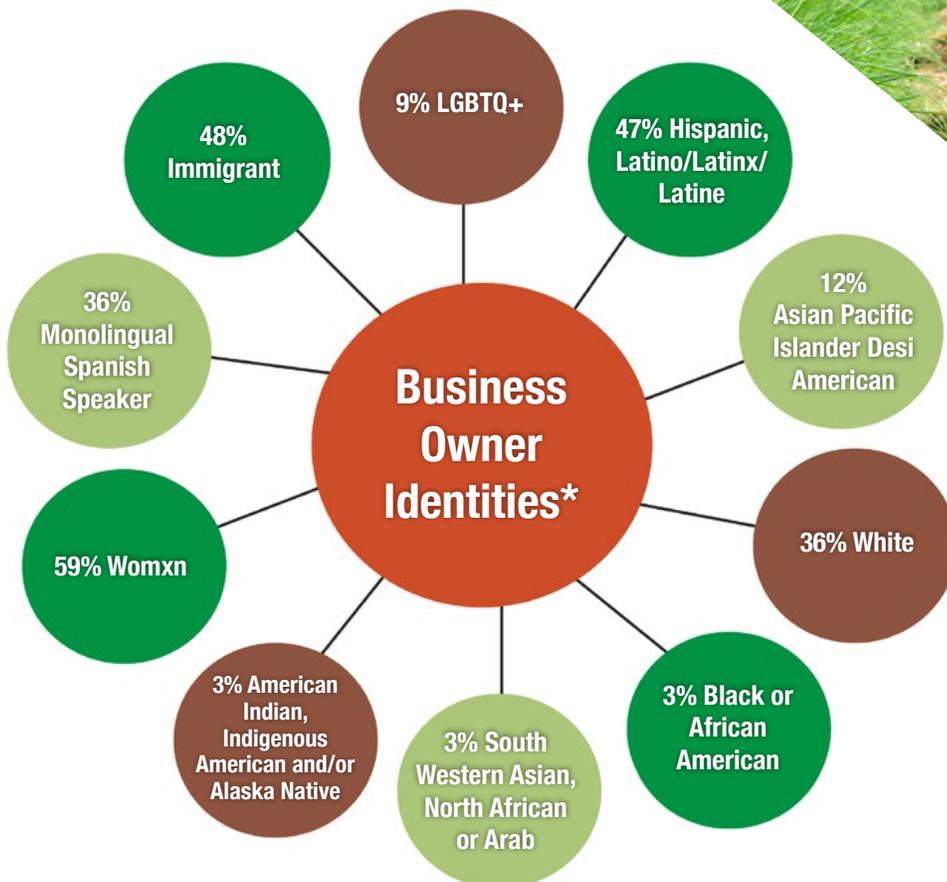


In 2022...

- KTA clients **employed 503 individuals** from local communities, paying an average of **\$16.51 per hour**
 - This is compared to the California minimum wage of \$14.00 per hour for employers with 25 employees or less (which applies to all but four businesses who responded to our assessment).
- **44.3% of clients** connected low-income communities with various products through local programs
 - Programs included Market Match, donations to local food pantries and schools, CSA boxes supporting individuals with limited access or culturally relevant needs, and more.



Buena Vista Organics, PC - Paige Green



**In sharing this self-reported client information, we honor that identity is fluid and intersectional for individuals, meaning this data may change over time and individuals may name multiple identities for themselves.*



Kilco Farm. PC-Kelsey Joy Photography

One-on-One Business Advising

Since our inception, KTA's core programmatic work has been 1:1 personalized business advising; meeting small-scale farmers and ranchers where they're at in their journeys. As they operate within food and economic systems that are not designed for them to thrive, we recognize our farmer and rancher clients as the experts of both their businesses and the broader systemic change needed. Thus, we work alongside our farmer and rancher clients to support them in realizing business and personal goals reflective of their values and visions. Our support of clients takes many shapes, extending from business planning to securing land and capital to preparing for life transitions. In fostering relationships, our advisors move at the pace of trust – often finding connection from being based in the same communities – by asking questions, listening, and offering resonant resources, training, and thought partnership.

KTA prioritizes work with owners of small sustainable farms and ranches who have historically been excluded from resources and recognition within our food system — namely the BIPOC, womxn, low-income, immigrant, and LGBTQ+ communities.

Highlights of Client Operations In 2022...

- Clients experienced a **57.9% average growth** in take home pay over a three-year period
 - On average, clients who have completed their three-year journey with us, began our program with \$21,350 in take home pay per business owner from their farm or ranch business, and grew to an average of \$33,718 after three years. This number does not account for inflation.
- Clients experienced an **8.8% increase** in average gross income from 2021 to 2022
 - This percentage includes grant and relief funding that individual clients received.
- **95% of clients** feel they improved their ability to make better business decisions in the past year

Learn More

For a deeper understanding of our advising program, visit our [Behind an Advising Relationship](#) feature.



Narci Organic Farm. PC-Fork in the Road



Gonzales Huerta Organics. PC-Henry Catalan

Client:

Blue House Farm

Ryan Casey has owned and operated Blue House Farm since 2005, expanding from four to 75 acres across two locations in Pescadero and San Gregorio. Throughout the years, the farm has produced over 50 types of organic mixed vegetables, fruits, and cut flowers for Bay Area communities, selling through farmers markets, restaurants, and wholesalers as well as an onsite farmstand and U-pick. Ryan actively fosters community through his farm both among customers and farm employees; Blue House is staffed by over 30 folks year round who keep the cycles of production and sales flowing on the farm.

When Ryan joined KTA as a client in 2017, he initially worked with Ecosystem Building Director David Mancera as his first business advisor. Their focus was on completing his new lease with Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) — a lease that gave him the option to purchase the property in the future. With David's guidance, Ryan was able to prepare capital resources and organize his business to scale up for the opportunity, marking a major growth milestone for Blue House Farm. Since this time, Ryan has completed several key projects in a joint effort with POST, local conservation agencies, and the San Mateo County Department of Housing to improve the land for both his business and the people it supports. With

POST's partnership, Ryan has replaced the irrigation pond on the property, developed a washing and packing facility, constructed a beautiful timber frame barn and tractor shed, and, most notably, built vital on-farm housing where the majority of his employees reside. Given that housing in San Mateo County is incredibly unaffordable and, thus, inaccessible, it has been important to Ryan to care for his employees by providing safe and stable housing.

As Ryan has transitioned to being an alumni client since completing KTA's three-year advising program, Director Sarah Gearen remains in touch with him, checking in periodically to hear how the business has been faring while offering a space for thought partnership and reflection. By the end of 2023, Ryan is looking to formally purchase the land from POST, affirming a long-term home for Blue House Farm, good jobs and secure housing for farm staff, and a continued abundance of produce and flowers on local tables.

Blue House Farm's Milestones Since 2016:

These highlights are not inclusive of everything that owner Ryan Casey has realized since 2016; however, they are reflective of his vision and leadership of Blue House Farm.

- 67% growth in acreage stewarded
- On-farm employee housing built
- Timber frame barn and tractor shed constructed
- Washing and packing facility developed
- Irrigation pond replaced



PC-Liz Avilés

PC-Gianna Banducci

Client:

Farmer Mai

Mai Nguyen started their Sonoma County grain growing business, Farmer Mai, in 2014 in the hopes of addressing both climate change and social inequity. With their family escaping from Vietnam, Mai has continued to be an outspoken advocate for first generation farmers of color in California, with many years of grassroots organizing and advocacy work under their belt. Mai hopes to not only farm in a way that enriches the soil, but also supports marginalized communities now and in the future. Over their nine years, Mai has sold their climate-adapted grains through farmers markets, wholesale vendors, and a CSA-style Flour Share. The transition to adding a Flour Share was a major shift from wholesale accounts, and an area where Senior Farm Business Advisor Lily Schneider provided thoughtful input. Together, Lily and Mai mapped out different models, working backwards from various financial and land ownership goals to see how Flour Share pricing could contribute to a more profitable and sustainable bottom line. With the launch of the Flour Share in 2020 and 2021, Mai was able to provide their freshly milled flour directly to customers, resulting in their most profitable years in business yet.

In 2022, with their second child on the way, Mai decided to step back from farming to take parental leave, allowing them time and space to give birth to their daughter and recuperate with both of their children. The pause also offered Mai a space to reflect on their role in the agricultural system, their long-term business goals, and their future. For Mai, and for many farmers, the decision to step back was incredibly difficult — Mai was hesitant to pause their thriving Flour Share, fearing the loss of customers and the progress they had made with their business. However, they also knew that both their fields and themselves needed time to rest and tend to the other fruitful parts of their life. Now, Mai is beginning the search for a forever-home for their farm, hoping for a stable location to grow their grain, nurture their family, and establish key grain processing infrastructure and storage.

Farmer Mai's Milestones Since 2020:

These highlights are not inclusive of everything that owner Mai Nguyen has realized since 2020; however, they are reflective of their vision and leadership.

- Launched a CSA-style Flour Share, providing direct-to-consumer access to climate-adapted grain
- Grew their family, taking time away from farming to recuperate and reflect
- Established land acquisition goals for a farm forever-home to support grain growing and house essential processing infrastructure





Ecosystem Building

While we support our clients at an individual level to grow and develop their farms and ranches, we recognize our impact is stunted if the ecosystem in which they operate is not supportive to their businesses. Five years ago, while expanding the number of clients in our advising program, we observed patterns among clients who were experiencing similar challenges in accessing land, capital, and markets. This drove us to launch KTA's Ecosystem Building program focused on building a friendlier marketplace that removes barriers around land, capital, and markets for small-scale farmers and ranchers.

The purpose of KTA's Ecosystem Building program is to foster greater farmer power, governance, and ownership

within the institutions and systems where, historically, small sustainable farmers and ranchers have not been heard, nor led decision-making. Our approach is to leverage values-aligned community partnerships and integrated capital with innovative models that center the needs and visions of small producers.

The following information highlights clients' needs, experiences, and practices in the marketplace, which we learn via our advising work and informs how we tailor our Ecosystem Building program. Ecosystem Building program data, including capital access information, was reported by KTA staff.

Learn More

To read about more Ecosystem Building projects, visit our [Ecosystem Building](#) page.



Green Thumb Farms. PC-Nicola Parisi

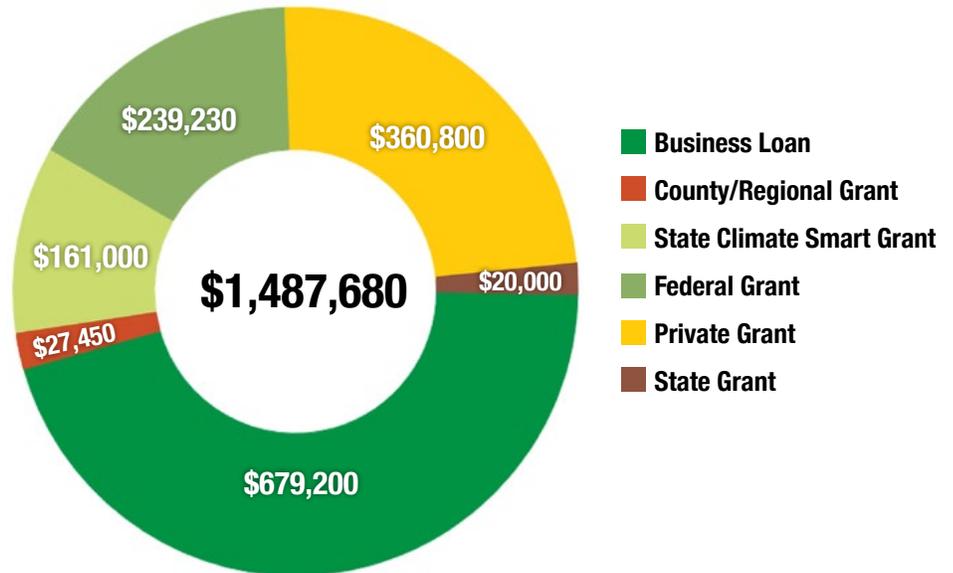
In recent years, an inflationary economy, global pandemic, and multiple climate crises have continually disrupted and shifted the marketplace surrounding our clients, emphasizing the importance of rebuilding a system that centers resilience and equity. In this same timeframe, our team has incubated or supported **26 Ecosystem Building** projects within the four regions we serve.

Capital

For small-scale farmers and ranchers, constraints around capital can stem not only from accessibility but, more broadly, who controls the funds. Capital representing critical investments or lifelines for our clients is often out of reach owing to language barriers, eligibility requirements, complex application processes, and extended timelines to apply and receive funds. Our Ecosystem Building program focuses on both securing necessary capital for farmers and ranchers while also ensuring that capital is more accessible and available at favorable terms.

Capital Awarded or Approved in 2022

Sum of amounts received by KTA clients based on each type of capital



To date, our Ecosystem Building work around capital has looked like: leveraging our relationships to connect community leaders directly with funders, collaborating with partners on new direct assistance opportunities, and piloting a community capital model that places funds in the hands of farmers for their stewardship (see the Fondo Solidario highlight).

In 2022...

- KTA supported 42 client farms and ranches in applying for **\$1.7M in various types of business capital**, including loans as well as government and private grants
- KTA clients were awarded or approved for **\$1.4M in various types of business capital**, including loans as well as government and private grants, based on funds that were applied for between 2021-22



Markets

In understanding how our clients get their product to market, we center our market access work on piloting new purchasing programs, coaching clients on market readiness, and developing new informational resources for buyers and farmers. We've collaborated with values-aligned supply chain partners – such as aggregators, distributors, and buyers – to open new opportunities for clients to foster buying relationships with large-scale sourcing companies and organizations. Among the benefits to clients are a secure source of income, limiting crop waste, and direct connections with chefs and buyers. Through these efforts, our Ecosystem Building program aims to empower small-scale farmers and ranchers with greater agency within the sales space so they can better withstand the volatility of markets.

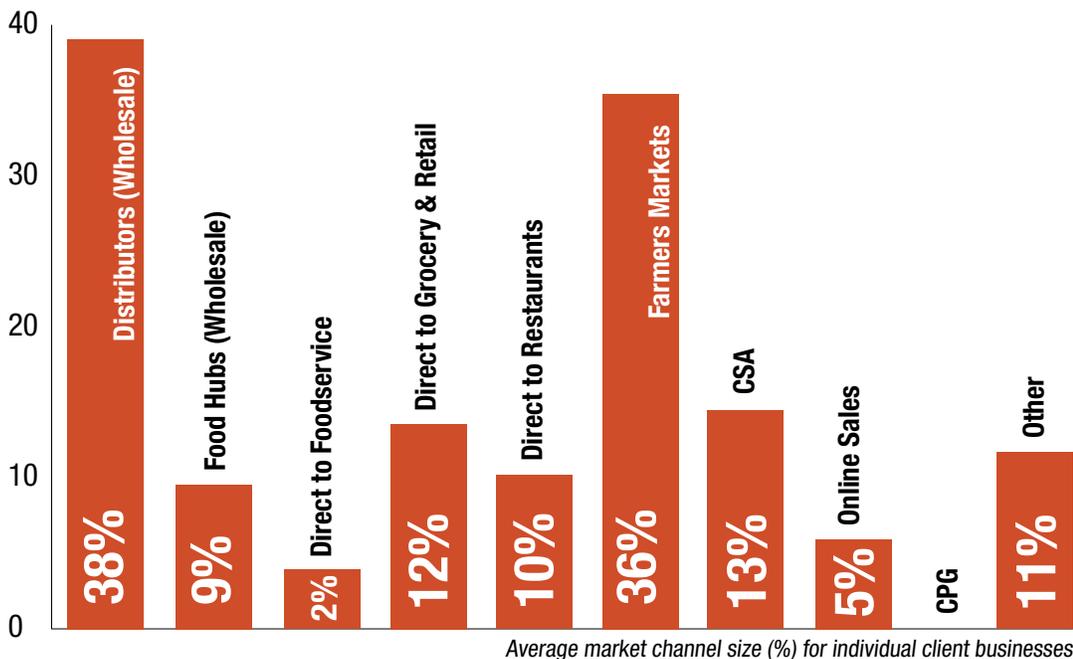
Learn More

For a deeper understanding of our market access work, visit our [Field Notes](#) blog series.



Longer Table Farm. PC-Kelsey Joy Photography

2022 Market Channel Composition

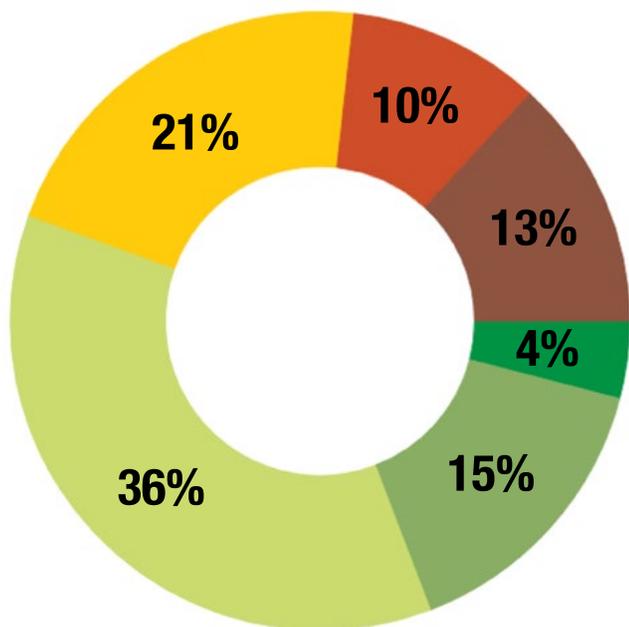


Data Deep Dive: This information represents how our clients get their product to market across the entirety of our client community. Not all clients sell into each channel, nor do all clients provide this information via our annual business assessment, thus the percentages will not total 100%. In growing our Ecosystem Building program, this data supports us in recognizing market trends among clients in addition to identifying opportunities for expanding market access.

Land

Our clients' goals around land access vary based on each individual's business and lived experience, and, for some, can entail exploring their role in Indigenous land rematriation. What remains clear is that long-term land security is a key component for farm viability. Thus, our Ecosystem Building program seeks to make more, higher quality agricultural land available for both individual

producers as well as groups of farmers and ranchers stewarding land collectively. Across the regions we support, our Ecosystem Building work lies in contributing to farmer-led land access projects (see the Ujamaa Farmer Collective highlight) while also experimenting with a new land ownership model enabling multiple farmers to purchase land at a reduced cost.



Client Land Tenure

Percentage of KTA clients with lease terms in each range

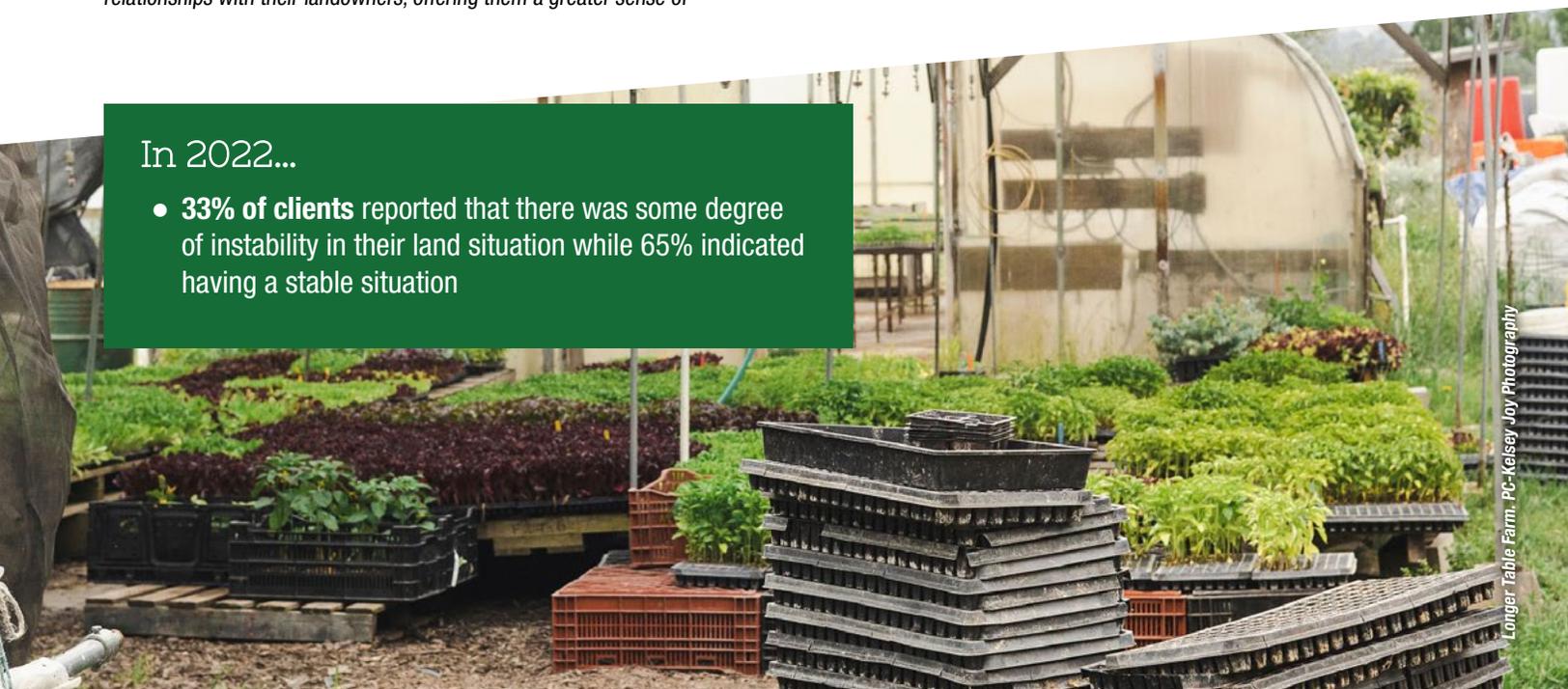
- 11+ years
- 4-10 years
- 2-3 years
- Less than 1 year
- Not stated in lease
- Not applicable (own land or access land for free)

Data Deep Dive: While a majority of our clients who responded to our annual business assessment reflected having lease agreements of three years or less, which can sometimes be associated with a feeling of less stability, a majority of clients identified feeling stable in their land situations. Some trends we've observed around this dynamic are that clients are building relationships with their landowners, offering them a greater sense of

security. Additionally, clients are engaging collective or peer-to-peer support by subleasing from one another or leasing parcels on the same property. A relevant consideration from a broader landscape standpoint is that the COVID-19 pandemic could have been a destabilizing factor when clients responded to this question in our 2021 assessment.

In 2022...

- 33% of clients reported that there was some degree of instability in their land situation while 65% indicated having a stable situation



Ecosystem Building Project: Ujamaa Farmer Collective

Inspired by the work of the California Department of Food and Agriculture's BIPOC Advisory Committee, KTA client Nelson Hawkins of We Grow Urban Farm, alongside Brian Pinkney, Nathaniel Brown, and Keith Hudson, collaboratively envisioned a project dedicated to the empowerment of Black and Brown farmers in Yolo County. Known as the Ujamaa Farmer Collective, the project addresses historic and systemic barriers around land access and security for underserved farmers by providing BIPOC-owned farm businesses with long-term, affordable leases on a central plot of land. The collective ultimately aims to achieve more than land access through the creation of a thriving community, based in cooperative economics, that can dismantle additional cost and access barriers for BIPOC producers.

Uplifting Nelson's leadership of the project, KTA Director Thomas Nelson has been a thought partner and advocate, helping Nelson navigate the logistics of the project, elevating Ujamaa's state funding request, and connecting the collective to key community partners who have offered support and funding. Among the core partners at both the state and regional level are the Community Alliance with Family Farmers, the Center for Land-Based



PC-Paul Towers

Learning, and The People's Land Fund. Now, as the collective searches for land, Thomas collaborates with the Ujamaa leadership team and core partners through the Local Advisory Council, offering guidance on pivotal strategic and tactical decisions and continuing to engage resources and supporters.

As Ujamaa Farmer Collective works towards its shared vision, it is not only transforming the landscape around BIPOC land access and security, but also centering stewardship and community as defined by the self-determination of Black and BIPOC farmers.



PC-Faige Green

Ecosystem Building Project: Fondo Solidario

Arising out of a supportive peer network among Latina farmers in KTA's Central Coast region, the Fondo Solidario is an innovative, farmer-governed revolving loan fund uplifting the needs of Latina farmers who have been historically underserved and struggle with limited access to capital. Led by Latina farmers from whom the idea originated, the Fondo Solidario provides quickturn, zero-interest, character-based loans, designed with the flexibility to support applicants as they respond to emergent needs and invest in their businesses. With public safety nets appallingly absent during the COVID-19 pandemic and recent climate crises, the Fondo represents a critically important capital resource among Latina co-owned farm businesses. By both governing the fund and being able to apply for it, these women – who named their group Red Solidaria de Mujeres en Agricultura – are empowered to support one another with funding that will strengthen the longevity of their businesses, create a nurturing community, and serve as a model for other community-based projects.

As the project has evolved over the past year and



PC-Tania Zuñiga

a half, Farm Business Advisor Tania Zuñiga from KTA's Central Coast team and Mariela Cedeño of Manzanita Capital Collective have provided vital support facilitating conversations and leveraging their business expertise to guide the advisory council in the formation of the fund and its structure. Over the course of 2022, Tania helped the women of the Fondo assemble their leadership structure, raise capital for the fund, establish key relationships with community partners, and, most importantly, encouraged them to not only access, but govern this rare and unique source of capital. The fund is poised to distribute its first loans at the end of summer 2023, marking a milestone in the elevation of Latina farmer voices and visions in our foodshed.



PC-Marilyn Martinez



A Glimpse of the Future

After 10 years, we continue to understand that change takes time. It is a constant learning journey that often necessitates many iterations alongside nurturing resilience that we can turn to throughout our experiences. We see these approaches modeled by our farmer and rancher clients, particularly as they steward ever-evolving natural landscapes and navigate a food system that doesn't center their identities and experiences. We know that our organization's ability to thrive similarly relies on engaging with the many facets of change.

In the next couple years, we are focusing on change and growth in our organizational structure as well as our program design and implementation. As a more nascent area of our work, we are defining strategy, design, and delivery of our Ecosystem Building program. Within our 1:1 advising program, we are committed to improving program efficiency via development of tools and systems in addition to conducting program evaluation. From an organizational lens, we are evaluating how our organizational structure responds to and supports the needs of our clients and staff. This entails exploring refinements and changes to address identified areas of opportunity and friction, further strengthening the foundation on which we do our work.

We'll continue to share what we learn and how we evolve as we seek to fulfill our vision for a more equitable and resilient food system.



Angie Estrada-Bugarín



Anne Sauer



Carine Hines



David Mancera



Erika Vargas



Favio Ortiz



Federica Beatrice



Gianna Banducci



H Nieto-Friga



James Nakahara



Justin Evans



Laura Marquez



Lauren Schneider



Lily Schneider



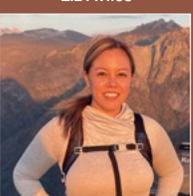
Liz Avilés



Maclovía Quintana



Maria Brennan



Marilyn Martínez



Paige Phinney



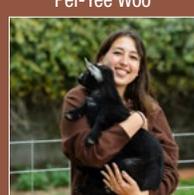
Pei-Yee Woo



Sarah Gearen



Soraya Matos



Sumi Kim



Tania Zúñiga



Thomas Nelson



Wendy Sosa

Our Team & Advisory Board

Throughout KTA's history, there have been numerous individuals who have shared their talents, expertise, and energy with our organization. The individuals below represent our current staff and advisory board, known as our Kitchen Cabinet. In addition to these individuals, we want to appreciate everyone who has effected change in our regional food communities by being a part of our organization. Our journey at KTA is reflective of the courageous path sown by our Founding Executive Director Anthony Chang, and molded by both past and present staff and Kitchen Cabinet members.

Team

Angie Estrada-Bugarín, Farm Business Advisor + Value Chain Coordinator
Anne Sauer, Operations Manager, Resource Generation
Carine Hines, Farm Business Advisor, Yolo, Solano & Sacramento
David Mancera, Director, Ecosystem Building
Erika Vargas, Regional Coordinator, Central Coast
Favio Ortiz, Farm Business Advisor, Central Coast
Federica Beatrice, Finance Manager
Gianna Banducci, Communications Manager, Brand
H Nieto-Friga, Value Chain Manager
James Nakahara, Farm Business Advisor, San Mateo & East Bay
Justin Evans, Development Associate
Laura Marquez, Farm Business Advisor, Central Coast
Lauren Schneider, Director, Operations
Lily Schneider, Senior Farm Business Advisor, North Bay
Liz Avilés, Partnership Manager, Institutional Giving
Maclovía Quintana, Director, People & Culture
Maria Brennan, Partnership Manager, Major Giving
Marilyn Martínez, Director, Central Coast
Paige Phinney, Director, North Bay
Pei-Yee Woo, Director, Resource Generation
Sarah Gearen, Director, San Mateo & East Bay
Soraya Matos, Communications Manager, Media
Sumi Kim, Communications Specialist
Tania Zúñiga, Farm Business Advisor, Central Coast
Thomas Nelson, Director, Yolo, Solano & Sacramento
Wendy Sosa, Operations Manager, Program

Kitchen Cabinet – Advisory Board

Bertha Magaña, Magaña Farm
Javier Cruz, Cruz Martínez Farm
Leticia Landa, La Cocina
María Ana Reyes, Narci Organic Farm
María Cadenas, Santa Cruz Community Ventures
Marni Rosen, Colibri
Nicole Mason, Veritable Vegetable

Sharing the Journey Together

As we turn from these last 10 years toward the ones ahead, we look forward to moving through more of life's journeys and cycles together. Similar to our farmer and rancher clients, we know our collective work to rebuild our food system lies in re-seeding, tending, harvesting, composting, and more. What we've seen and felt from our **donors** and programmatic partners – specifically

their contributions, collaboration, and advocacy – is that there is a strong, vibrant community surrounding small sustainable farmers and ranchers. We are certain that when we unite in this work, the impacts to individual farms and ranches have a greater opportunity of extending across a field or pasture, a region, and a food system.



Connect with KTA

Get in touch, stay connected, and learn more about the farmers and ranchers we support.

kitchentableadvisors.org/get-involved
info@kitchentableadvisors.org

 [@kitchentableadvisors](https://www.instagram.com/kitchentableadvisors)

 [@KitchenTableAdvisors](https://www.facebook.com/KitchenTableAdvisors)

 [Kitchen Table Advisors](https://www.linkedin.com/company/kitchen-table-advisors)

Contribute with KTA

It takes all of us working together to rebuild our food system toward community, justice, and ecological responsibility. If you haven't yet joined us in this work, there's always room for one more at the kitchen table.

kitchentableadvisors.org/donate

