

Rooting the Future



In the Past

# Annual 2023 Report



Here is the annual report for Freedom Farm Azul 501(c)3  
for the year 2023.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

03

Overview

04

Who We Are

05

Letter from the Executive Director

06

Key Achievements

12

Agriculture Overview

15

The Future Ahead

17

Acknowledgements





# OVERVIEW



Welcome to the 2023 Annual Report of Freedom Farm Azul, a 15-acre farm in Prattville, Alabama, that serves as a beacon of hope and resilience. Our mission is deeply rooted in nourishing, educating, and healing our community, with a focus on marginalized groups. This report outlines our key initiatives, achievements, challenges, and vision for the future, reflecting our unwavering commitment to sustainable agriculture and social justice.



# WHO WE ARE



## Mission

At Freedom Farm Azul, our mission is to cultivate a thriving community through the roots of sustainable agriculture. We are dedicated to nurturing the land and our neighbors by providing organic, life-sustaining produce and fostering a place of healing and education. Emphasizing inclusivity, we serve as a sanctuary where all system-impacted individuals can reconnect with the earth and grow together in harmony with nature.

## Vision

Our vision at Freedom Farm Azul is to be a cornerstone of transformation where the seeds of social justice and environmental stewardship germinate into a vibrant ecosystem of learning, health, and empowerment. Envisioning a future where every individual has access to nutritious food and a connection to their agrarian legacy, we strive to cultivate an equitable and sustainable model of community that reverberates through generations and inspires a global renaissance of land-based healing.



## A NOTE FROM JAZZ

Dear Community,

As we reflect on the past year at Freedom Farm Azul, I am filled with a deep sense of gratitude and hope. Our 15-acre farm, nestled in the fertile heart of Prattville, Alabama, has continued to be a sanctuary of growth, healing, and community—a place where the soil and soul meet.

Our mission—to nourish, educate, and heal—has never been more relevant. We have seen our community come together, bridging gaps and nurturing a space where everyone can find refuge and connection with the land. This year, despite the challenges we faced, our resolve to create a more equitable and just food system has been steadfast.

The highlight of our year was the Black August Observation Celebration. This event exemplified the essence of our mission, combining nature walks, creative workshops, and the celebration of cultural heritage into a rich tapestry of community engagement. Children learned to estimate the age of trees, identify different species, and express their creativity through art, all while fostering an appreciation for our environment and history.

Our advocacy efforts reached new heights with the collaboration on the documentary "Lost Inheritance: How Black Farmers Are Losing Their Land Through Heirs' Property." This initiative allowed us to shed light on a complex issue that touches the lives of many in our community. We aimed to educate and inspire action, and the reception has been overwhelmingly positive.

In addition, we were honored to facilitate a congressional briefing on heir property, spearheaded by the Union of Concerned Scientists. This was a monumental step towards bringing much-needed attention to the legislative changes required to support and empower Black farmers across the nation.

Our agricultural operations, led by the incomparable Farmer Greer, have been the heartbeat of Freedom Farm Azul. We have celebrated our second year of bountiful organic food production, supplying numerous families with fresh produce and embodying Farmer Greer's philosophy of traditional, sustainable farming.

As we turn the page to the coming year, we remain focused on expanding our impact. We look forward to planting more crops, involving more young people in our work, and developing our infrastructure. With plans to acquire essential farming equipment, introduce livestock, and complete the construction of our educational classroom, the future is ripe with possibility.

The journey of Freedom Farm Azul is a tapestry woven by many hands. To our dedicated team, volunteers, partners, and every one of you who have supported us—thank you. Your belief in our mission fuels our daily work and fortifies our vision for the future.

As we share this annual report, we invite you to walk alongside us into a future where every person has access to the healing power of the land. Together, we will continue to sow the seeds of change and harvest the fruits of justice and community wellness.

With deep gratitude,

Jasmyn Elise Story  
Executive Director, Freedom Farm Azul



# LOST INHERITANCE FILM

## Advocacy and Collaboration

In 2023, Freedom Farm Azul collaborated with the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) to raise awareness about the challenges of heir property among Black farmers. This partnership involved participation in a documentary.



## Our Impact

- The documentary, available on [YouTube](#), features interviews with Jasmyn Elise Story, Executive Director of Freedom Farm Azul, and our farm manager, Farmer Greer. The film sheds light on the complex issue of heir property and its impact on Black agricultural communities.
- **Role of Freedom Farm Azul:** Highlighting the real-world implications of heir property laws and their impact on farming practices and land ownership among Black farmers.
- **Outcome:** The documentary short with over 1.1K views, has been instrumental in educating a broader audience about the challenges associated with heir property, fostering a greater understanding and empathy towards Black farmers.



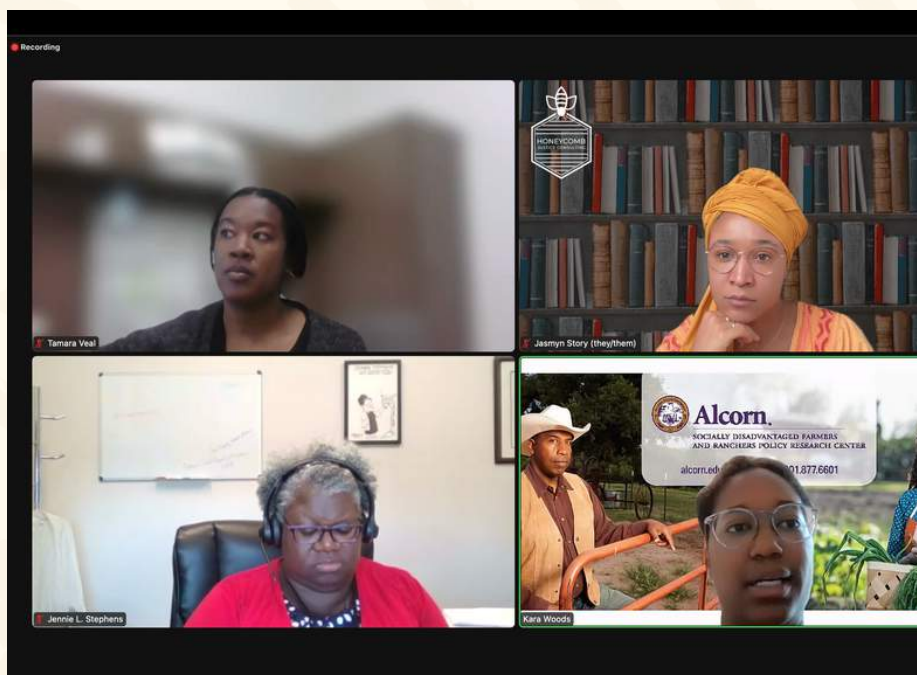
# CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING

## Advocacy and Collaboration

The UCS invited Jasmyrn to facilitate a congressional briefing on the topic of heir property. The panelists included:

- Dr. Jennie Stephens, Center for Heirs' Property Preservation
- Dr. Kara Woods, Socially Disadvantaged Ranchers and Farmers Policy Research Center, Alcorn State University
- Tandelyn Daniel, The Federation of Southern Cooperatives

This briefing was a crucial step in bringing the issue of heir property to the forefront of legislative discussions, potentially influencing policy decisions that affect Black farmers nationwide.





# BLACK AUGUST

## Activities

- **Overview:** Due to construction delays, this year's Black August observation was moved to October. The event included a range of activities focused on connecting with nature and celebrating community heritage.
- **Activities:**
  - **Nature Walks with Farm Manager Greer:** Participants, especially children, learned to estimate the age of trees and identify different species in the forest.
  - **Creative Workshops:** Children engaged in painting pumpkins and creating art on recycled paper.
  - **Carnival in the Field:** A fun-filled carnival where children participated in games, won prizes, and supported each other enthusiastically.
  - **Celebration of Fannie Lou Hamer's Birthday:** A special tribute to Fannie Lou Hamer, which included singing to her and the trees, fostering a sense of community and connection to history.
  - **Agricultural Activity:** Planting turnip greens with Farmer Greer, a hands-on experience teaching about sustainable farming and preparation for winter.

## Participant Engagement

- **Educational Impact:** Participants gained valuable knowledge about local flora and sustainable agriculture practices.
- **Community Building:** The event fostered a strong sense of community among participants, celebrating cultural heritage and promoting environmental awareness.
- **Skills Development:** The hands-on activities provided children with practical skills in gardening and an appreciation for nature.







# OF MURALS & TRAILS

## The Tapestry Mural

Gabriel Boyajian, an esteemed Architectural Designer & Artist, has crafted a captivating mural for installation on the property, drawing rich inspiration from the global tradition of textiles, Alabama's unique textile heritage, and the diverse flora and fauna of the region. Install coming in '24.

## Trail Signs

Isabella León-Chambers, a dedicated Archivist, has meticulously researched the history of the land, uncovering pivotal moments of federal land allotment following the removal of Native American communities.





# WHAT WE SOWED & YIELDED

## Advocacy and Collaboration

Jasmyn was asked to speak at the 2023 Environmental Grantmakers Association Retreat.

## Our Collaboration

The session addressed the historical context of agricultural practices in America, focusing on the decline of BIPOC farmers due to discriminatory practices. It emphasized the importance of reversing this trend to restore racial equity, justice, and inclusion in agriculture.

**Discussion of New Funding Models:** The session explored innovative funding models like Potlikker Capital and Foodshed Capital, which support the restoration of land and farming for BIPOC farmers.

## Our Role

Our ED highlighted the vision and work of Freedom Farm Azul in Alabama, demonstrating how BIPOC-led, regenerative farming is central to community building, healing, and support.





# MEDIA HIGHLIGHT

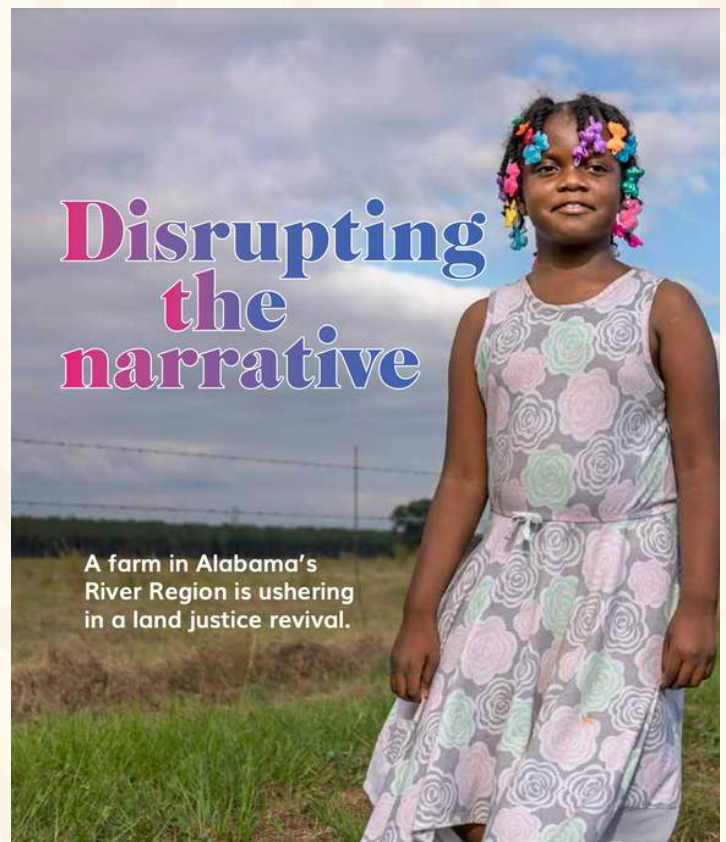
## Publication

Freedom Farm Azul was honored to be the cover feature of the Alabama Humanities Alliance's publication.

The feature offers an in-depth look at the work and impact of Freedom Farm Azul, highlighting its contributions to community wellness, sustainable farming, and educational initiatives.

This recognition by a respected organization underscores the importance and effectiveness of Freedom Farm Azul's efforts in promoting cultural, educational, and agricultural development within Alabama.

The full article can be accessed online in the 2023 issue of Mosaic Magazine by the Alabama Humanities Alliance. [Here is the direct link to the magazine.](#)





# AGRICULTURE OVERVIEW



## Farming Philosophy

Farmer Greer employs traditional farming techniques taught by his grandfather, emphasizing the taste and quality of real food. This diverse range of produce highlights the farm's ability to yield a variety of crops, contributing to the local food supply and supporting the farm's mission of nourishing the community. The quantities harvested reflect the dedication and skill of our team, led by Farmer Greer, in maximizing the productivity of the land with sustainable methods.

Farmer Greer's work at Freedom Farm Azul represents not just agricultural production, but a deeper commitment to living sustainably, healing, and community building. His vision for the future includes expanding the farm's capabilities and continuing to serve as a beacon of hope and learning for the community.



# AGRICULTURE CONT.

## Tools and Techniques

Utilization of a small handheld tiller, picks, shovels, wheelbarrows, and a riding lawn mower. Watering through hose pipes connected to faucets and use of natural, organic compost and Neem Oil for crop protection.

## Celebrations and Challenges

Celebrated the second year of farming with notable success in organic food production. Faced challenges with limited equipment but overcame them through resourceful and sustainable practices.

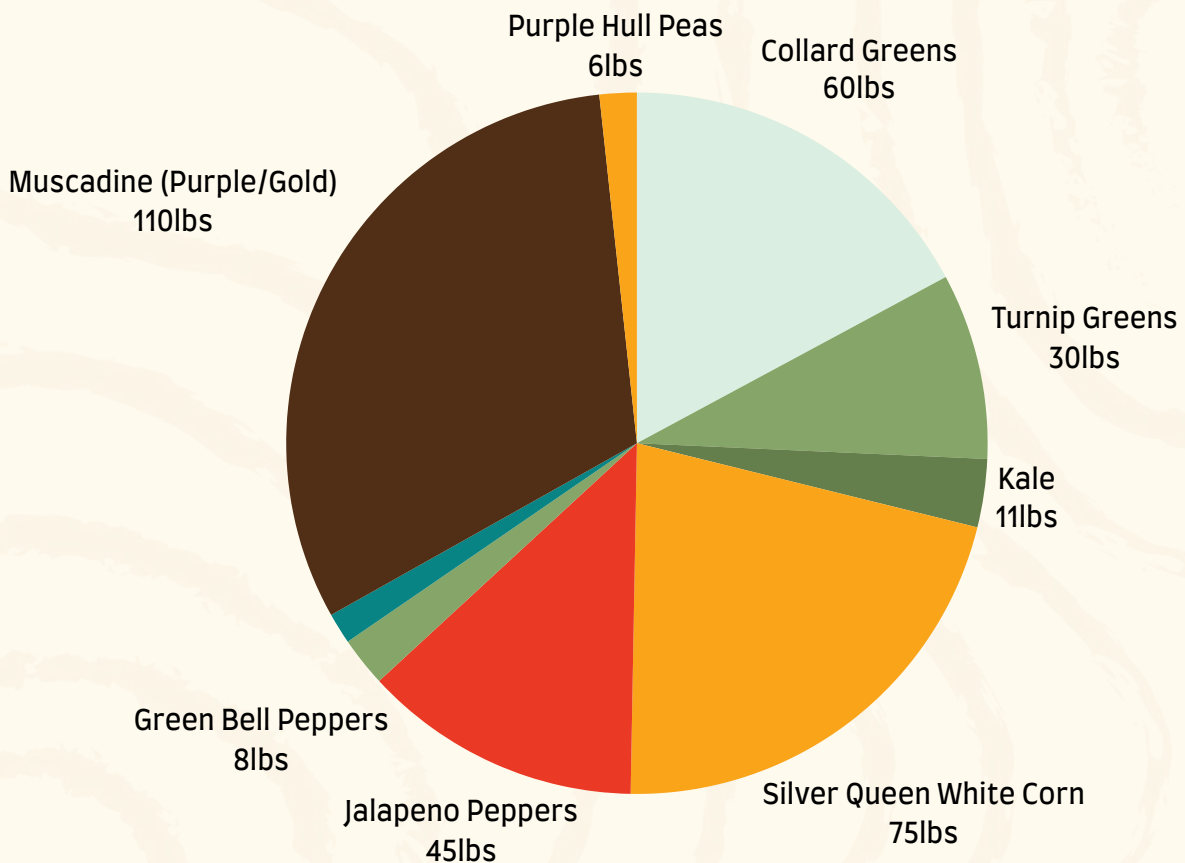




# AGRICULTURE CONT.

## Agricultural Productivity: Harvest Breakdown

In 2023, Freedom Farm Azul successfully cultivated and harvested a variety of crops, demonstrating the farm's commitment to organic and sustainable farming practices. The following is a breakdown of the produce harvested:





# WHERE WE'RE GOING

## With your support we will

Expand Onsite Farming

Increase Youth Engagement

Develop Infrastructure

Secure Equitable Salaries

Offer Farm Education

Install Trail Signs

Clear Creek

Install the Tapestry Mural

Increase Onsite Trainings

Plant the Pear Orchard

## Our Fundraising Goals

These numbers are a glimpse and an approximation based on a \$800,000 budget. With your continued support we aim to build an equitable sustainable team and land stewardship.

### Category

### Adj. Budget

Payroll

\$465,800

Buildings & Grounds

\$100,800

Program Expenses

\$30,400

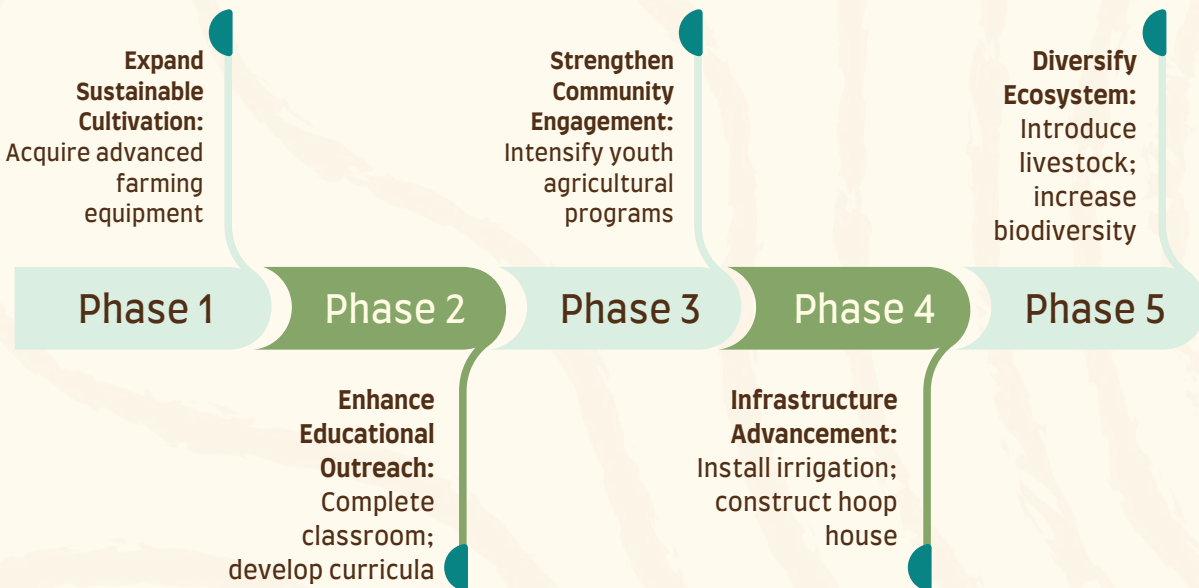
Equip Maintenance

\$15,900



# 2024 & BEYOND

## Join Our Journey



## Resource Planning

To realize the ambitious growth outlined in our five-phase plan for Freedom Farm Azul, acquiring the necessary resources is paramount. Securing advanced agricultural equipment, educational materials, and infrastructure components is essential to transform our vision into a tangible reality, fostering sustainable growth and deeper community impact.





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## Our Gratitude is Boundless

### Friends & Collaborators

As we close another chapter at Freedom Farm Azul, we carry with us the indelible mark of your partnership.

Your collaboration has been the wind beneath our wings, propelling us forward in our mission to heal, educate, and nourish. Together, we have sown seeds of change, and the harvest we share today is as much yours as it is ours.

Thank you for being co-conspirators in this journey towards a more sustainable and equitable future.

### Donors & Sponsors

Your contributions to Freedom Farm Azul have been like rain during a drought—vital, refreshing, and nurturing.

Because of your generosity, our fields are fertile, our community is thriving, and our vision for a more just world is one step closer.

Thank you for believing in the power of growth, both in the soil and in the soul. We are deeply grateful for your support.

[Donate Here](#)





# THANK YOU



## Contact Us For More Information



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