

STEAM feeds the community

In 2015, the staff of HES and community members began conversations about how to best implement changes that would make a great impact on the academic and social/emotional well-being of our students. Staff members, district support personnel, and our Mayor met to review test scores and behavior referral data. We also discussed the need for healthy food and the impact a nutritious diet could have. The team decided to build a school garden in hopes that it would serve multiple purposes.

The Garden Design team met with landscapers, district groundskeepers, and volunteers from the University of Georgia Extension office to evaluate and discuss possible garden sites. A location was decided and the HES Garden was established in the spring. We began with four raised garden beds that were donated by a group of volunteers, "Hands on Henry."

With the help of our community volunteers, the garden has since expanded to include 20 additional raised beds, composting bins, and a small greenhouse. Classes are responsible for planting, tending, and harvesting their crops. We have also incorporated a small pollinator garden to help our plants grow.

Our students use what they learn at HES to start and maintain small gardens in their backyards. We also send the surplus vegetables home with our students to supplement their diets. We are teaching our students how to thrive in a food desert and empowering them with the tools to continue beyond our school.

As students experienced hands-on activities in planting, maintaining, and harvesting various crops from the school garden, students and teachers sought ways this new adventure could benefit the Hampton community. It started with a driving question: How can we provide our community with healthy food options? Every grade level collaborated with our STEAM teacher to actively create innovative ways to provide healthy food options for our community.

That is when the opportunity to team up with the Atlanta Community Food Bank (ACFB) was presented. The ACFB gave the option of conducting a mobile pantry or an in-school pantry. We decided to begin with a mobile pantry. Our first Market Day was in November 2019 and in December 2019 we partnered with the City of Hampton to advertise the Market Day event to the entire city beginning January 2020. The program has continued to grow and we currently serve over 5,000 people from around the metro Atlanta area.

Our Market Day success is only possible with the support of the many people and organizations that help us make the necessary connections. The Atlanta Community Food Bank has been instrumental and serves as the launching pad for us. They work with our Administrators to organize and plan for each event and gather food for distribution. Our city government officials serve as volunteers and help connect families in need with the support they need. Our local churches serve as volunteers and help transport meals to those that lack transportation. Lastly, we cannot leave out our PBIS Ambassadors and high school students, who before school closings volunteered their time to unload, setup, and help bring groceries to cars.

Our community members are essential to our success but, it is our teachers and staff members who are the heartbeat of the program. They arrive early and stay late, tirelessly bagging produce and making sure our families are fed. They personally contact families in need and ensure they receive the 30-50 pounds of healthy food. Sometimes, that means delivering the groceries themselves.

Knowing that so many families struggled with food insecurities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we wanted to expand this program. We received additional support from our school district and ACFB increased the order of food supply to meet the needs of our community. That said, we began serving our community weekly on Fridays. We conducted the first of these services in March at McBrayer Park across from our school. We quickly realized that we would need a larger venue due to the community response. Shortly thereafter, we were blessed to partner up with Atlanta Motor Speedway to host our weekly Market Day. The month of April and May were hosted and we saw thousands of cars and fed thousands of individuals and children. Our local news stations helped advertise our Market Day and helped us share our story.



Henry Herald News Story
 11Alive News Coverage
 NBC News Coverage
 FOX News Coverage

The tables below display the months and the households, individuals, and children served in those months.

Figure 1 below displays the data from November 2019 to March 2020

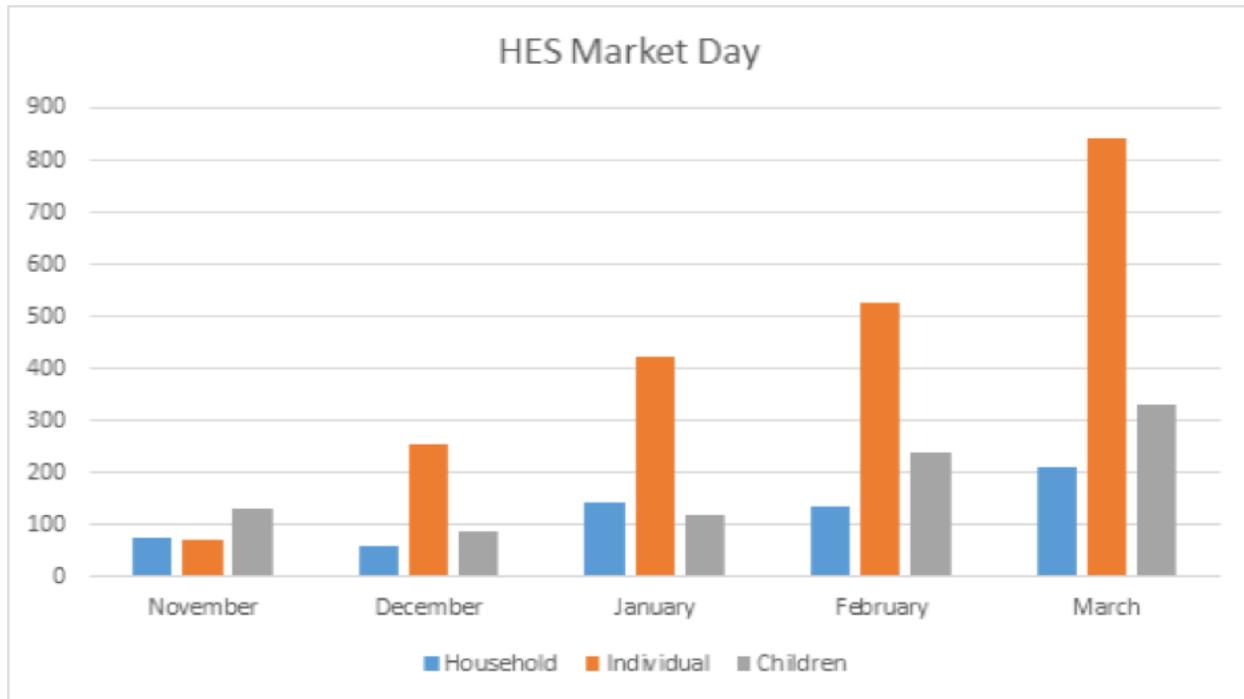


Table 1 below displays the data from November 2019 to March 2020

Month	Number of Household	Number of Individuals	Number of Children
November	75	170	132
December	59	256	86
January	144	423	118
February	134	525	240
March	212	841	332

Figure 2 below displays the data from November 2019 to March 2020

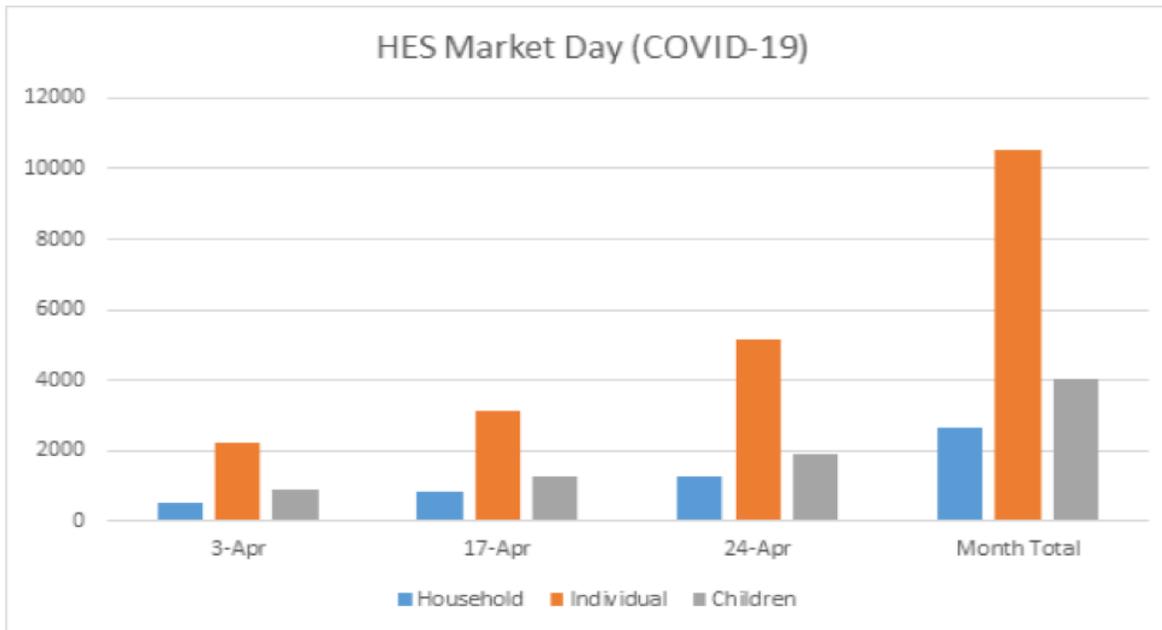


Table 2 displays Market Day during the COVID-9 pandemic

Date	Number of Household	Number of Individuals	Number of Children
April 3, 2020	502	2,213	858
April 17, 2020	839	3,128	1,256
April 24, 2020	1,280	5,164	1,914
Total for Month	2,621	10,505	4,028