

Urban Agriculture at the U.S. Botanic Garden

Agriculture is the cornerstone of human survival. The more than 7.8 billion people alive in the world today depend on plants for food, clothing, shelter, energy, and other critical resources. Since the U.S. Botanic Garden's creation 200 years ago, one of the Garden's primary functions has been growing and demonstrating plants for agriculture and economic plants to the public.

Connecting people and agriculture is a critical need given the lack of exposure to agriculture and food production for most Americans today and the great challenge in successfully feeding our growing populations. With ever more people living in urban areas, understanding agriculture through an urban lens can provide an educational opportunity.

Using its urban setting and building on its long history of growing plants and educating people about them, the USBG is working to promote science and education through sustainable agriculture in urban settings; support health and wellbeing in urban communities by increasing food access through local food production; and community engagement through meaningful connections with food and agriculture. By building a network of organizations helping with food production and education, the Garden is strengthening people's capacity to transform their lives, institutions, and communities through engagement in urban agriculture.

Read below to learn more about the U.S. Botanic Garden's urban agriculture work.



Urban Agriculture Resilience Program

The United States Botanic Garden and American Public Gardens Association are collaborating to support public gardens and their community partners in using urban agriculture and food-growing to address food security challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. In June 2021, the Urban Agriculture Resilience Program awarded \$403,450 to 21 public garden partnerships across the United States that are fostering public engagement and education in urban food growing and building resilient agriculture programs.

The awards will help participating programs in 16 states and Washington, D.C. integrate urban food growing and education while addressing food security challenges in their communities. The program seeks to leverage the strength of public gardens working with partners in their communities, ranging from schools, universities, food pantries, community gardens, local government agencies, and nonprofit organizations. The Urban Agriculture Resilience Program is providing new insights, approaches and future opportunities for public gardens and their partners to creatively utilize their unique assets to advance food and agriculture education.

The Urban Agriculture Resilience Program began in 2020 as a way for the USBG and the Association to help public gardens continue urban agriculture and

Public garden and community partner collaborations awarded 2021 funding include:

Alabama

Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens, in collaboration with Birmingham Botanical Gardens, Alabama Cooperative Extension System, and Community

Arizona

* Desert Botanical Garden, in collaboration with Unlimited Potential, TigerMountain Foundation, The Orchard Community Learning Center, and Roosevelt

Colorado

* The Gardens on Spring Creek, in collaboration with Food Bank for Larimer County

Delaware

* Delaware Center for Horticulture, in collaboration with Pennsylvania Horticultural Society

District of Columbia

* Friends of the National Arboretum, in collaboration with the U.S. National Arboretum

Georgia

* Atlanta Botanical Garden, in collaboration with Friends of Refugees and Global Growers Network

* Trees Atlanta, in collaboration with the City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Resilience and the City of Atlanta Department of Parks and Recreation

Illinois

* The Morton Arboretum, in collaboration with Homan Grown, Stone Temple Baptist Church, and Permaculture Chicago Teaching Institute

Michigan

* University of Michigan Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum, in collaboration with Oakland Avenue Urban Farm, Detroit Black Community Town Farm

Minnesota

* Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, in collaboration with Pillsbury United Communities, WE WIN Institute, St. Paul City Schools, Plymouth Christian Youth Place, North Point Health & Wellness Center Community Food Shelf, and CAP Agency Food Shelf

Missouri

* EarthDance, in collaboration with The Vine at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Restorative Justice Movement, and BTC St. Vincent's Food Pantry

New York

* Mary Mitchell Family and Youth Center, in collaboration with The New York Botanical Garden, Morris Campus Farm, La Finca del Sur, and Morning Glory

* Queens Botanical Garden, in collaboration with La Jornada Food Pantry at Queens Museum

North Carolina

* Ability Garden, in collaboration with New Hanover County Arboretum and Cooperative Extension, Wilmington Housing Authority

Ohio

* Holden Forests & Gardens, in collaboration with Revolutionary Love Garden, Have a Hive, and Lettuce Tree Farms

Pennsylvania

* Grumblethorpe Historic House & Gardens (PhilaLandmarks), in collaboration with Chef Gail Hinson, Johnson House Historic Site, and Historic Fair Hill

* Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, in collaboration with East Park Revitalization Alliance, Neighborhood Gardens Trust

* Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, in collaboration with Homewood-Brushton YMCA

Tennessee

* Knoxville Botanical Garden and Arboretum, in collaboration with The Museum of Infinite Outcomes

Washington

Wyoming

* Friends of the Cheyenne Botanic Gardens, in collaboration with Wyoming Hunger Initiative

See the 2021 awardees and learn about their work:

[Learn about the 2020 Urban Agriculture Resilience Program >](#)



Training Veterans in Urban Farming as a Career

The USBG and the National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) have partnered to create week-long Armed to Urban Farm sustainable agriculture workshops for their farm partners. Armed to Urban Farm gives military veterans an opportunity to experience sustainable, profitable small-scale farming enterprises and learn about urban farming as a career. Armed to Urban Farm, which is based on NCAT's popular Armed to Farm program, combines engaging classroom sessions with farm tours and hands-on experience. Participants learn about business planning, budgeting, recordkeeping, marketing, urban soils, land access, vegetable production, and more. Participants gain the basic principles of operating a sustainable farming enterprise. In addition, attendees join a nationwide network of supportive farmer-veterans and agricultural professionals.

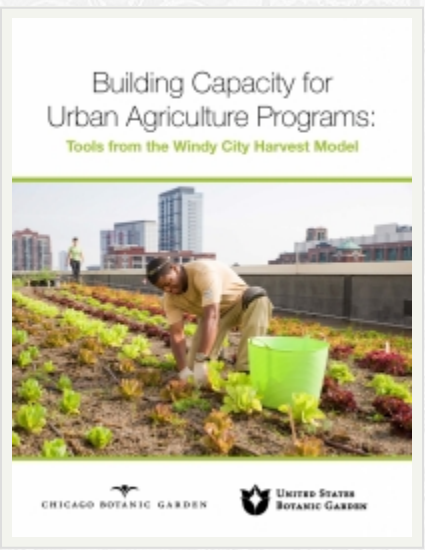
Previous workshops

Baltimore, MD - September 2021

Cleveland - September 2019

Washington, D.C. - September 2018

[Learn more about the Armed to Urban Farm program](#)



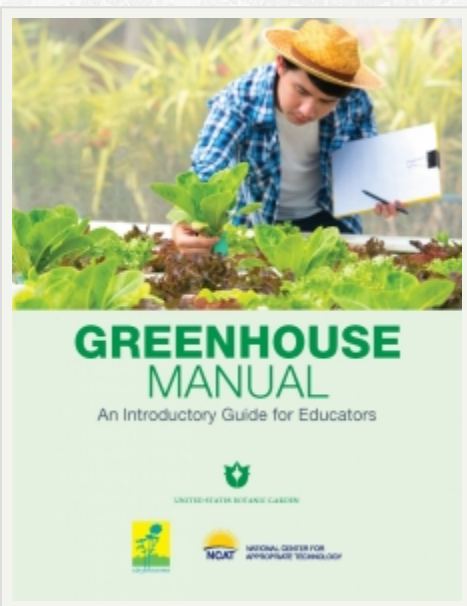
Building Urban Ag Capacity at Public Gardens

The U.S. Botanic Garden has partnered with Chicago Botanic Garden's Windy City Harvest, an established urban agriculture program within the public garden, to develop a train-the-trainer program and urban agriculture toolkit. This collaboration is providing hands-on, practical support for public gardens and their partners interested in developing or expanding urban agriculture programming. Based on feedback from other gardens, the collaboration has designed and offered a series of urban agriculture workshops for public garden professionals and their partners. Information and resources from these workshops is compiled in Building Capacity for Urban Agriculture Programs Toolkit.

The workshops and toolkit incorporate topics such as designing urban agriculture programs, developing community partnerships, selecting and establishing sites, cultivating donors and identifying funding opportunities, and evaluating and communicating program successes.

Upcoming workshops

- 2021 Virtual Workshop: July 2021-December 2021.
- Previous workshops: New Orleans - March 2020, Chicago - August 2019



Greenhouse Manual and Trainings for Educators

The U.S. Botanic Garden, the National Center for Appropriate Technology, and City Blossoms recognized the emerging need for user-friendly guidance on how to use greenhouses and maximizing their potential in the school setting. To that end, the partners developed an introductory manual for educators wanting to better use greenhouses for programming. The manual clearly and concisely lays out a basic understanding of greenhouses, how to integrate them into lessons, and how to use greenhouses in classroom curricula and out-of-school activities.

The manual includes lesson plans as well as basic information on layout and operations of a greenhouse, growing plants (especially during the school year), seedling nutrition, identifying and treating diseases, pest management in greenhouses, basic budgeting, and succession planting.

This useful resource will help facilitate transformative learning experiences in schools nationwide, while cultivating students' appreciation of the importance of urban agriculture.

[Download the manual as PDF >](#)

Upcoming trainings

[Check back for future trainings](#)

[Learn more about this partnership and manual](#)

Report: The Role of Botanic Gardens in Urban Agriculture

The U.S. Botanic Garden (USBG) and the American Public Gardens Association undertook this study to identify viable urban agriculture program models that are economically and environmentally, socially, and economically enriching, and to better understand how public gardens could achieve meaningful impact. The Association used a research approach to evaluate the state of urban agriculture at community-based nonprofit and for-profit organizations, government agencies, universities, and other public gardens. Insights were gained by exploring literature, surveying the community of practice, and interviewing practitioners and experts about urban agriculture initiatives and educational programming.



Online Food and Agriculture Programs

As part of our ongoing educational programming, we offer periodic online programs about food and agriculture, including programs specifically focused on

Find upcoming programs at www.usbg.gov/OnlinePrograms

The USBG Kitchen Garden

The USBG Kitchen Garden demonstrates food growing in an urban setting, with tours, tastings, workshops, and children's activities . The fruits and vegetables are used for educational classes and cooking demonstrations, and excess produce is donated to local community-based hunger relief organizations.

Find the Kitchen Garden in Bartholdi Fountain and Gardens

Source URL: <https://m.usbg.gov/urbanagriculture>