

2025 National GrowTogether Conference



Presented by



In partnership with



With support from



National GrowTogether Conference Guide

CUNY Graduate Center | June 5 - 7, 2025

Guided Tours | June 8, 2025

Welcome to the **2025 National GrowTogether Conference: Planting Seeds of Resilience** — an inspiring four-day gathering of community gardeners and leaders nationwide to celebrate the power of urban green spaces and community gardening.

Presented by NYC Parks GreenThumb in partnership with the American Community Gardening Association, Denver Urban Gardens' Urban Garden Project, and with support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.



NYC Parks GreenThumb

[@greenthumbnyc](https://greenthumbnyc.org) / greenthumbinfo@parks.nyc.gov / nycgovparks.org/greenthumb

Established in 1978, GreenThumb is proud to be the nation's largest urban gardening program, sustaining over 550 community gardens and supporting thousands of volunteer gardeners throughout New York City. GreenThumb gardens create hubs of neighborhood pride and provide a myriad of environmental, economic and social benefits to the neighborhoods in which they thrive. GreenThumb inspires, supports, and sustains community-led development and care of gardens throughout New York City. By providing free access to land, garden materials, technical assistance, educational workshops, and seasonal programs, GreenThumb supports neighborhood volunteers who steward community gardens as active resources that strengthen communities.



Denver Urban Gardens (DUG)

[@denverurbangardens](https://denverurbangardens.org) / dug.org / dirt@dug.org

Established in 1985, DUG is one of the largest largest independent non-profit community garden organizations in the country with robust education and food access programming in addition to our field operations. DUG supports 200 community gardens and 24 food forests across seven counties in metro Denver and engages 40,000+ constituents, partners with over 40 organizations, grows over 650,000 pounds of food and has greened over 35 acres across the city. In 2023, DUG started the Urban Garden Project as a Community of Practice.

The goals of the Urban Garden Project are to 1) Unite, uplift, and amplify the national and global community garden movement, 2) Establish community gardens as “must haves” instead of “nice to haves” in the eyes of city planners, 3) Provide capacity building to bolster the operational strength of new and existing community garden organizations so they can focus on growing food and strengthening communities.



American Community Gardening Association (ACGA)

[@acga1979](https://acga1979.org) / communitygarden.org / info@communitygarden.org

Founded in Chicago in 1979, the ACGA is a grassroots non-profit advocacy organization focused on community gardening. ACGA's mission is to build community by increasing and enhancing community gardening and greening across the United States and Canada.

With over 1,000 individual and 252 organizational members, ACGA links 2,100 gardens across Canada and the US, ranging from family allotments to tiny pollinator pocket parks, and from school gardens to urban farms. ACGA membership includes active community gardeners, supportive volunteers, garden organizing and sponsoring organizations, governmental agencies, and horticultural professionals including teachers, horticultural therapists, cooperative extension agents, landscape architects, and academic researchers.

Follow GreenThumb, ACGA, and DUG on social media to find out about the latest community gardening news in NYC and beyond! Share your day at the National GrowTogether Conference / #GTGT2025 on social media and tag us!

Conference Overview

Thursday, June 5th (Page 4)

Check-in

12:00 P.M.–3:30 P.M.

Lobby of Recital Hall

Opening Remarks

1:00 P.M.–1:30 P.M.

Recital Hall

Session 1 Workshops & Panel Discussions

1:45 P.M.–3:00 P.M.

6th Floor & Recital Hall

Session 2 Workshops & Panel Discussions

3:15 P.M.–4:30 P.M.

6th Floor, Recital Hall

Friday, June 6th (Page 7)

Check-in

8:30 A.M.–3:30 P.M.

Lobby of Recital Hall

Keynote Panel Discussion

9:30 A.M.–10:45 A.M.

Proshansky Auditorium

American Community Gardening Association Open House & Member- ship Meeting

10:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.

Skylight Conference Room

Session 1 Workshops & Panel Discussions

11:00 P.M.–12:00 P.M.

C Level, 5th & 6th Floor,

Lunch Break

12:00 P.M.–1:30 P.M.

Session 2 Workshops & Panel Discussions

1:30 P.M.–2:30 P.M.

C Level, 5th & 6th Floor,

Session 3 Workshops & Panel Discussions

2:45 P.M.–3:45 P.M.

C Level, 5th & 6th Floor,

Saturday, June 7th (Page 7)

Check-in

8:30 A.M.–9:15 A.M.

Lobby of Recital Hall

Opening Ceremony

9:15 A.M.–10:15 A.M.

Proshansky Auditorium (C Level)

Welcome: Carlos Martinez,
Chief, NYC Parks GreenThumb

Remarks and Land

Acknowledgement:

Iris Rodriguez-Rosa, First Deputy
Commissioner, NYC Parks

Keynote Address:

Robin Wall Kimmerer

T-shirt Design Contest Winner:

Rina Root / @romaroot

Exhibitors / Networking

10:30 A.M.–2:30 P.M.

Dining Commons, 8th Floor

Skylight Conference Room,

9th Floor

Session 1 Workshops & Panel Discussions

10:30 A.M.–11:45 A.M.

C Level, 5th, 6th, 8th, & 9th Floors

Lunch Break

12:00 P.M.–1:00 P.M.

Session 2 Workshops & Panel Discussions

1:00 P.M.–2:15 P.M.

C Level, 5th, 6th, 8th, & 9th Floors

Session 3 Workshops & Panel Discussion

2:30 P.M.–3:45 P.M.

C Level, 5th, 6th, 8th, & 9th Floors

Sunday, June 8th

Tours

Multiple offsite locations

Join GreenThumb and local
partners for guided tours of
community gardens, NYC Parks
facilities, and other interesting
urban green spaces across
New York City. Pre-registration
before the conference is required.



Carmen Pabón del Amanecer Jardín

CUNY Graduate Center Room Guide

C Level

Proshansky Auditorium,
Rooms C197, C198, C201–C205,

Registration

1st Floor

Segal Theater, Recital Hall

5th Floor

Rooms 5382, 5383, 5417

6th Floor

Rooms 6417, 6421, 6494,
6495, 6496

7th Floor

Single Occupancy and
Gender-Neutral Restrooms

8th Floor

Dining Commons, Rooms 8203,
8301, 8304, 8400, 8402

9th Floor

Rooms 9205, 9206, 9207,
Skylight Conference Room

Get an Interpreter for Any Workshop

If you requested a language interpreter in advance, stop by the check-in table in the lobby of the Recital Hall on the first floor. Spanish language interpreters are also available to come with you to any workshop of your choosing!

Where to Eat

The Concourse lobby and classrooms on the C Level (C202–205) will be open during lunch break, except on Thursday. Most other conference classrooms on the 6th and 8th floors will also be open for lunch seating. Please be mindful of workshop facilitators setting up for their workshops, and please throw away all trash so the classrooms are clean and ready to go for the next workshop session.

Meditation and Prayer Room

Room 9201 (9th floor) is available for prayer and meditation. Please be respectful of this space and do not use it for private conversations, phone breaks, eating, etc.

Lactation Room

If you need private space to pump or breastfeed, please stop by the check-in table on the first floor near the Recital Hall and we'll get you access.

GreenThumb Table

Stop by the GreenThumb Table in the Networking area (Dining Commons, 8th Floor), where you can talk to a Community Engagement Coordinator and get all your garden questions answered.

Saturday Keynote Speaker

Robin Wall Kimmerer

Robin Wall Kimmerer is a mother, scientist, decorated professor, and enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. She is the author of *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*, which has earned Kimmerer wide acclaim. Her first book, *Gathering Moss: A Natural and Cultural History of Mosses*, was awarded the John Burroughs Medal for outstanding nature writing, and her other work has appeared in *Orion*, *Whole Terrain*, and numerous scientific journals.

As a writer and a scientist, her interests in restoration include not only restoration of ecological communities, but restoration of our relationships to land. She holds a BS in Botany from SUNY ESF, an MS and PhD in Botany from the University of Wisconsin and is the author of numerous scientific papers on plant ecology, bryophyte ecology, traditional knowledge and restoration ecology. She lives on an old farm in upstate New York, tending gardens both cultivated and wild.



Photo: John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

Thursday Program

Morning

Check-in

12:00 P.M.–3:30 P.M.

Lobby of Recital Hall

Opening Remarks

1:00 P.M.–1:30 P.M.

Recital Hall

Session 1

1:45 P.M.–3:00 P.M.

Roots of Partnership (Part 1): Institutional Power

Panel in the Recital Hall

Garden Design Principles for Supporting Student Learning

Room 6496

Garden Mentorship: How to Revitalize Community Gardens

Room 6421

Modernize Your Community Garden with GIS

Room 6494

Scaling Community Gardens: Self-Governance, Technology, and Collective Impact

Room 6495

Session 2

3:15 P.M.–4:30 P.M.

Roots of Partnership (Part 2): Lessons from the Field

Panel in the Recital Hall

Strategies for Evaluating School- Based Cooking and Gardening Programs

Room 6496

The Centralized Community Garden Organization - Cultivating Sturdy, Durable, Thriving Garden Communities

Room 6421

Leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) for your Garden Organization

Room 6495

Green Maps, Gardens, and You!

Room 6494

Thursday, June 5

Session 1

1:45 P.M.–3:00 P.M.



Panel

Roots of Partnership (Part 1): Institutional Power Recital Hall

Moderator: Ursula Chanse, Director of Bronx Green-Up (New York Botanical Garden)

Panelists: Jason Sheets, Director of Greening Projects and Community Gardens (New York Restoration Project), Sally McCabe, Associate Director of Community Education (The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society), Jessica Hill, Community Programs Manager (Jones Valley Teaching Farm)

Strong connections to community partners outside the garden can strengthen the sustainability and impact of the space. Whether the partners are community members, places of worship, nonprofits, schools, or government agencies, garden groups can utilize the connection as a foundation for success. While community gardens foster self-determination by empowering individuals and communities to control their food systems, build social connections, and cultivate a sense of place with their local environment, partnerships allow community groups to engage new members, establish a consistent working group, apply for financial opportunities, and secure technical assistance, among many other things. For the community partner, establishing a reciprocally rewarding relationship with a community garden group supports neighborhood volunteers who steward local resources that strengthen communities. Hear from the experts on the side of the institutional agency for insights on these relationships and how to begin seeking out an organization appropriate for your community garden to team up with.

Workshops

Garden Mentorship: How to Revitalize Community Gardens

Room 6421

Calvin Gardner (The University of Florida)

How can an organization support community gardens in a way that empowers them to grow and become self-sufficient? Learn how to become a “garden mentor,” with real ways you can help gardeners with challenges such as garden planning, correct seeding, volunteer management, and cooking up harvests. Taught by an agricultural extension agent that works on revitalizing urban community gardens, you’ll learn fun and engaging activities that you can do with any garden to help them take their next steps in becoming confident gardeners.

Garden Design Principles for Supporting Student Learning

Room 6496

Adam Walker (The Battery Conservancy - Battery Urban Farm)

Gain concrete ideas for simple changes to your garden site that will improve accessibility, simplify group management, and help students of all ages engage with the space in self-directed ways. Applicable to both community gardens and school gardens.

Modernize Your Community Garden with GIS

Room 6494

Michelle Nelson (M-NCPPC, Montgomery Parks, Community Garden Program), Emma Morel (Community Garden Program Assistant Manager, Montgomery Parks)

Are you interested in using location-based technology to improve community garden management and communications? Join us to learn how Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is helping to modernize and streamline Montgomery Parks’ Community Garden Program in Maryland! We’ll demonstrate the use of ArcGIS and Survey123 in creating garden maps and automated inspection processes, as well as how these integrations have significantly reduced staff time spent on inspections and increased gardener activity and engagement in the gardens. We’ll facilitate small group discussions to explore how GIS can make a difference in your work.

Scaling Community Gardens: Self-Governance, Technology, and Collective Impact

Room 6495

Omar Brownson (Los Angeles Community Garden Council)

How can self-governance and technology scale the impact of community gardens? The Los Angeles Community Garden Council (LACGC) serves more than 40+ community gardens with 2,000+ members with just one staff member by leveraging digital tools that empower local garden managers. Our model strengthens individual gardens while demonstrating the power of a connected network to drive scalable change—such as our citywide water conservation efforts. Learn how digital platforms enable garden managers to self-organize, collaborate, and advocate for broader policy and environmental change.

Thursday Session 2

3:15 P.M.–4:30 P.M.



Panel

Roots of Partnership (Part 2): Lessons from the Field

Recital Hall

Moderator: Nina Browne, Community Field Manager (Brooklyn Botanic Garden)

Panelists: Scott Cecil, Community Garden Coordinator (Kingman Park Rosedale Community Garden), Sally B. Fowler, Founding President (Fifth Street Community Garden), Kelly Wood, Founding Member and Chair (San Carlos Community Garden)

Hear from the experts on the side of the community garden for insights on these relationships and how to begin seeking out an organization appropriate for your community garden to team up with.

Workshops

The Centralized Community Garden Organization - Cultivating a Sturdy, Durable, Thriving Community Garden Network

Room 6421

Linda Appel Lipsius (Denver Urban Gardens)

Learn more about Denver Urban Gardens' centralized organizational structure. From securing land, water and insurance to recruitment and support of garden leaders and tree keepers to tracking plot assignments and plot fees to centralized fundraising for all gardens and all food forests in the network. We'll make the case for pulling back management of complicated and burdensome administrative tasks to HQ - tasks that "sink" community gardens.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) for your Garden Organization

Room 6495

Nick Storrs (Homegrown Kitchen Gardens)

We will go beyond the basics of working with Large Language Models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT, Claude, and Gemini to how to craft prompts and interactions that give us more valuable and actionable results in our gardens. In this interactive workshop, explore use cases in creating content calendars for marketing materials, newsletters and communication writing, building simple business plans, and grant writing.

Green Maps, Gardens, and You!

Room 6494

Wendy Brawer (Green Map System)

Your garden can lead a community mapping project using Green Map System's open source tools to highlight community assets, from solar sites to farmers markets and reuse shops, as well as challenges to wellbeing and climate health. You decide - your Green Map can take the shape of a printed folding map or a neighborhood mural that centers your garden, or you can create a crowd-sourced digital map project that includes all-ages mapping events in and around your garden. Utilized in 65 countries, Green Map's resources are free for non-commercial projects - there's even a Local Food icon set! This workshop introduces the tools, case studies and garden-centric outcomes at GreenMap.org.

Strategies for Evaluating School-Based Cooking and Gardening Programs

Room 6496

Rachel Dannefer and Liza Engelberg (Edible Schoolyard NYC)

This workshop will share our approach to evaluating Edible Schoolyard NYC programs, including cooking and gardening classes for students in NYC public schools, as well as a fellowship program to build the capacity of other educators to offer edible education. Learn how we created our evaluation plan, development of evaluation tools, and key findings. We will share resources for others interested in evaluation of school- and garden-based programming.

Friday Program

Morning

Check-in

8:30 A.M.–3:30 P.M.

Lobby of Recital Hall

Keynote Panel: Community Gardens as Critical Infrastructure for Thriving Cities

9:30 A.M.–10:45 A.M.

Proshansky Auditorium

American Community Gardening Association Open House & Membership Meeting

Skylight Conference Room

10:30 A.M.–11:30 A.M.

All are welcome

12:00 P.M.–1:00 P.M.

Paid members only

1:30 P.M.–2:30 P.M.

All are welcome

Session 1

11:00 A.M.–12:00 P.M.

Engaging Earth: Practices for Soil Carbon Stewardship in Community Gardens

Panel in the Proshansky
Auditorium

Roots of Partnership (Part 3): Sustaining Gardens Together

Panel in the Recital Hall

Seeds of Success: Capacity Building for Sustainable School Gardens

Room C201

Expand Your Classroom: Using Gardens for Inquiry Based Learning

Room 6421

Regenerative Orchards: The Seven Layer Food Forest Garden

Room C197

Participatory Garden Design Workshops

Room C202

Street Tree Habitats: Creating Ecosystems in Small Spaces

Room C203

Communicate your Garden: Tools for Sharing your Organizational Impact

Room C204

Grafting MAP NYC and Share Shed NYC: Mapping Food, Building Community

Room 5383

Growing your Garden's Story: Visual Marketing and Communications for Community Gardens

Room 5382

Finding Bhutan: How Land and Resource Access Fosters Financial Resilience, Wellness, and Flavor in Nashville's Immigrant Communities

Room C205

Funding Your Dream Community Garden: A Go-to Guide for Getting Grants

Room 6495

Session 2

1:30 P.M.–2:30 P.M.

Durable Models: Governance, Funding, and Resource Management for Community Garden Support Organizations

Panel in the Proshansky
Auditorium

Many Ways of Knowing Community Gardens: University Research Partnerships

Panel in the Recital Hall

College Students in the Garden: Volunter Work, Internships, Grant- writing, and More

Room 6421

School Garden Event Planning 101

Room C201

Create a Rodent-Proof 3-Bin Composting System

Room 5382

Ethical Storytelling

Room C204

Increasing Capacity for Just Language: Native, Non-native, and Invasive Species Language and Frameworks

Room C197

Theatre for Climate Resilience: Exploring the Role of Community Gardens

Room C198

Getting 'Into the Weeds' of Growing Your Community Garden

Room 6496

From Dirt to Digital: Tech Tools to Grow Your Farm Stand

Room 5383

Food History: Growing, Preserving, and Cooking Across Cultures

Room C205

Neighbors Without Homes: Gardening Through the Housing Crisis

Room C198

Thriving Together: Community Garden Renewal in NYC

Room 6494

Gardening for Climate Change

Room C202

Street Tree Care 101

Room C203

Money, Money, Money: Corporate Funding Strategies That Work

Room 6495

Friday Session 3 2:45 P.M.–3:45 P.M.

Unite, Uplift, and Amplify an Abundant Community Garden Movement

Panel in the Proshansky Auditorium

Community Gardens Without Borders: Building Sanctuary for Immigrants

Panel in the Recital Hall

Resilient Gardens Project: Hands-On Activities for Climate Wise Garden Education

Room 6421

Engaging Young Minds in Community Gardens

Room C201

Growing and Managing a Native Perennial Garden

Room C205

See the Forest in your Street Tree

Room C203

Cultivating Conversations so we Bloom Together

Room 6496

Gardens for the Housed, Housing-insecure, Unhoused, and Formerly Unhoused

Room C198

Garden Placemaking Wisdom Around the World

Room C202

Stewardship Engagement Strategies

Room 5382

Community-Powered Seed Discovery: Growing Resilient Crops Together

Room C204

NYC Land-Based Healing Project

Room 6494

State-Wide Resources for Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture

Room 6495

Friday Keynote Panel Community Gardens as Critical Infrastructure for Thriving Cities

While community gardens have been part of the urban fabric for centuries, only recently have they been acknowledged and embraced at the federal, state and local governmental levels as an integral part of the food system. In 2018, urban agriculture, including community gardens, was added to the USDA's mandate, including the establishment of the People's Garden Initiative. Where the rubber meets the road, however, is at the city level, where urban agriculture policies are established and brought to life. We'll hear from three urban agriculture leaders who will share the different approaches to urban agriculture and community garden support taken by New York City, Philadelphia, and Atlanta. While a very positive, highly impactful development is occurring around the country, we'll see how and why this is a far more complex undertaking than it might seem on the surface.

9:30 A.M.–10:45 A.M. | Proshansky Auditorium

Panelists

Qiana Mickie, Executive Director (NYC Mayor's Office of Urban Agriculture),
Ash Richards, Urban Agriculture Director (Philadelphia Parks & Recreation),
J. Olu Baiyewu, Urban Agriculture Director (City of Atlanta - AgLanta)



The Garden By The Bay

Friday, June 6

Session 1

11:00 A.M.–12:00 P.M.



American Community Gardening Association (ACGA) Open House & Membership Meeting Skylight Conference Room

10:30 A.M.–11:30 A.M.

Open House (Part I): All conference attendees welcome

12:00 P.M.–1:00 P.M.

Seated Lunch & Presentations: For paid ACGA members only
(Space is limited)

1:30 P.M.–2:30 P.M.

Open House (Part II): All conference attendees welcome

Whether you're a New Yorker or traveling in for the conference, ACGA invites you to connect with fellow gardeners, regional leaders, and national experts during the annual ACGA membership meeting and open house. Join one of the two open house sessions today to learn about how ACGA has served as a trusted resource for community gardeners across North America since 1979. Board members span 11 states and bring decades of experience in urban agriculture, community development, and greening.

Come with your gardening questions, explore ACGA programs, and learn how ACGA can support your garden and community. Paid ACGA members are invited to a seated lunch and formal presentations at the ACGA membership meeting. Learn about organizational updates, highlights from the past year, and ways to engage with ACGA's work moving forward. We look forward to growing with you!

Panel

Engaging Earth: Practices for Soil Carbon Stewardship in Community Gardens

Proshansky Auditorium

Moderator: Dr. Perl Egendorf, Assistant Professor (Pace University)

Panelists: Dior St. Hillaire, Co-Founder (GreenFeen OrganiX), Saara Nafici, Director (Red Hook Farms), Lauren Peters, Founder (Corn Sister Circle)

Agriculture is a major source of atmospheric greenhouse gases, contributing to climate change. And yet, soils have the capability of storing carbon in organic matter, in forms that can keep it out of the atmosphere for thousands of years. While the notion of "soil carbon sequestration" has become well known, misconceptions abound about this topic. Soils are not banks in which carbon can simply be deposited and retained. Soils are dynamic systems in which carbon, and all the other plant and animal nutrients, cycle in and out. Many researchers are calling for new paradigms of "soil carbon stewardship," where the role of growers and people interacting with land is to support the plants, microbes, macroorganisms, and minerals in developing healthy thriving communities. Come listen to the perspectives and practices that our diverse panelists can offer community gardeners for stewarding carbon in (urban) soils and enhancing soil health.

Roots of Partnership (Part 3): Sustaining Gardens Together

Recital Hall

Moderator: Jim Hackler, Five Points Farm and journalist

Panelists: Amy L. Dabbs, School & Community Gardening

Coordinator (Clemson Extension), Justin Trezza, Senior Director

of Healthy Neighborhoods (Pennsylvania Horticultural Society)

Continuation of the Roots of Partnership series. Hear from the experts on the side of the partnership agency for insights on these relationships and how to begin seeking out an organization appropriate for your community garden to team up with.

Friday Session 1 (Con't)

11:00 A.M.–12:00 P.M.

Workshops

Grafting MAP NYC and Share Shed NYC: Mapping Food, Building Community

Room 5383

Anne-Laure White and Ciara Sidell (MAP NYC, Share Shed), Mario Giampieri

MAP NYC and Share Shed NYC share a vision of using data platforms to advocate for and facilitate the movement of tangible resources between and towards urban food producers. In this workshop, we will highlight our distinct but often similar pathways towards creating data platforms for and by growers. As we introduce participants to our platforms, we will highlight lessons and possible next steps. Learn more and stay for creative and collaborative breakout sessions in which we will discuss possible applications of data to the many projects in which the group is engaged.

Growing your Garden's Story: Visual Marketing and Communications for Community Gardens

Room 5382

Octavia Octaviano (Octaviano Collective Co)

This hands-on, interactive workshop will empower community garden leaders and nonprofit organizations with practical tools and strategies to effectively communicate their impact and engage their communities. Learn how to create compelling visual content and develop clear messaging that resonates with stakeholders, volunteers, and donors. Gain practical skills in four essential areas of nonprofit communications: storytelling fundamentals, visual brand development, internal communications strategy, and external marketing implementation. Leave with actionable templates, strategies, and resources they can immediately implement in their organizations.

Regenerative Orchards: The Seven Layer Food Forest Garden

Room C198

Carol Burton (Director of Permaculture at Urban Harvest, Inc), Randall Mosman (Urban Harvest, Inc)

Learn how to transform a conventional orchard into a thriving food forest garden by incorporating the seven layers of a food forest. Discover how ground cover, shrubs, herbaceous plants, mid-story, and upper canopy layers can enhance the biodiversity and productivity of your garden. Whether you have a small urban garden or a larger acreage, we will show you how to scale these principles to fit your space. By integrating swales and nitrogen-fixing plants into plant guilds, you can create a more resilient and self-sustainable garden that benefits both the environment and your community.

Participatory Garden Design Workshops

Room C202

Teague Weybright and Isabel Filson (City of Santa Monica - Community Gardens Program)

This hands-on workshop is designed to engage the community and gather input for a garden design. Unleash your inner artist and pick up some tips and techniques to help garden leaders bring community members together in a fun and engaging way, giving everyone a voice in designing a garden.

Street Tree Habitats: Creating Ecosystems in Small Spaces

Room C203

Patrick Over (Greenbelt Native Plant Center)

Some plants work better in street tree beds than others. The Street Tree Habitats Project is an initiative of Greenbelt Native Plant Center and uses native plants and community scientists to learn which of the 1,200 plant species native to NYC grows best in street tree beds. Volunteers are given tree bed kits with plants, and signage and are asked to plant, care for, and submit observations on the health and survival of their plants. We will discuss our methods and early results from the first two years of the project.

Funding Your Dream Community Garden: A Go-to Guide for Getting Grants

Room 6495

Lissie Stewart (NOLA Artist Incubator/ Galvez Garden)

Gain valuable knowledge and resources on available funding sources and general tips for securing grants for community gardens. Gardeners will have the opportunity to share success stories and learn about the value of community partnerships to strengthen their garden programming. Finally, participants will create a personalized, compelling narrative about their gardens to use when they go home to seek funding for their future garden projects.

Expand Your Classroom: Using Gardens for Inquiry Based Learning

Room 6421

Sara Kempton and Linsley Kriaris (Van Cortlandt Park Alliance)

How can I use my garden space as an educational tool? How can I engage school groups or community members in meaningful programming? What can I teach inside a garden? Answer these and other questions through a deep dive into Van Cortlandt Park Alliance's educational programming which spans pre-k through high school and one-time trips to multi-session internships.

Friday Session 1 (Con't)

11:00 A.M.–12:00 P.M.



Seeds of Success: Capacity Building for Sustainable School Gardens

Room C201

Tonia Scherer (Seed St. Louis)

While summer is a prime time for the garden, upkeep can be challenging when schools are closed. Engaging the community and forming partnerships are key to any sustainable school or community garden project. This hands-on workshop will explore a variety of strategies for connecting with your community and engaging new volunteers throughout the year so that garden maintenance becomes a shared and more manageable task. While this session was created with school garden projects in mind, most of the content can be applied to any group looking to identify assets and build partnerships within their community.

Finding Bhutan: How Land and Resource Access Fosters Financial Resilience, Wellness, and Flavor in Nashville's Immigrant Communities

Room C205

Rebecah Boynton and Patricia Tarquino (The Nashville Food Project)

From morning glory to Nepali mustard greens, Growing Together introduces new flavors to Nashville while providing significant economic opportunities for immigrants and refugees. Facilitators of Growing Together will share the evolution of the program from a single acre of grass to a fully operational urban farm, CSA, and farmers' market. Through farmers' stories and first-hand accounts, attendees will gain insight into the journeys of immigrants and refugees, and the greater impact programs like Growing Together can have on the future of urban agriculture.

Communicate your Garden: Tools for Sharing your Organizational Impact

Room C204

Osiris Mancera (Denver Urban Gardens)

Participants will explore various tools for communicating the impact of their gardens or organization. From trending digital resources to traditional outlets, we'll explore the merits of various options to ensure inclusivity.

Friday Session 2

1:30 P.M.–2:30 P.M.



Panel

Durable Models: Governance, Funding, and Resource Management for Community Garden Support Organizations

Proshansky Auditorium

Moderator: Naomi Lacey, President (Community Gardens Australia)

Panelists: Omar Brownson, Executive Director (Los Angeles Community Garden Council), Carlos Martinez, Chief (NYC Parks GreenThumb), Ben Helphand, Executive Director (NeighborSpace), Linda Appel Lipsius, Executive Director (Denver Urban Gardens) Community garden support organizations come in all shapes and sizes. Some are all volunteer while others include a robust full-time paid staff. Some are embedded in governmental agencies while others are independent nonprofits. Some are centrally governed, funded, and resourced while others have decentralized some or all of those functions. Hear from leadership of four organizations from across the country with various configurations about the considerations and influences that went into their current structure, the pros and cons of each, and the synergies across the different models. This panel will demonstrate that no single model is right for every city, highlighting the wildly different on-the-ground realities that must be taken into consideration in every city.

Many Ways of Knowing Community Gardens: University Research Partnerships

Recital Hall

Moderator: Erika Svendsen, Former Research Social Scientist & Team Leader (NYC Urban Field Station)

Panelists: Dr. Jelili Adebisi, Professor, Dept. of Earth, Environmental, and Geographical Sciences (Northern Michigan University), Dr. Anna Ortega-Williams, LMSW, PhD, Associate Professor at the Silberman School of Social Work (CUNY Hunter College), Dr. Cynthia Zutter, Member (Green and Gold Community Garden) and Vice-Provost Professor of Anthropology (MacEwan University)

Unearth the latest in the research field of community gardens and how their discoveries transform the future of urban agriculture. Learn from a variety of academic and non-academic disciplines on subject matter pertaining to all aspects of community gardening. Speakers will feature community-led science, long-term social research, land-based healing, and urban wellness focus groups.



Workshops

Ethical Storytelling

Room C204

Amy Hudson and Ashley Wiley (Food Well Alliance)

Every nonprofit aims to produce compelling stories that educate and engage their audiences. Participants will explore the principles of ethical storytelling and learn practical strategies for crafting narratives that empower and respect the lives of those covered. We'll run through our process for communicating with interviewees and how to maintain transparency and ownership throughout the storytelling process.

Theatre for Climate Resilience: Exploring the Role of Community Gardens

Room C198

Laura Simpson and Janelle Zapata Castellano

Explore the intersection of community gardens, climate resilience, and social justice through the lens of applied theatre. Engage in creative theatre exercises to explore how gardening fosters resilience, strengthens community ties, and supports climate adaptation. By using role play, storytelling, and collaborative theatre-making, we'll examine the role of gardens as spaces of resistance and healing. Together, we'll reflect on how these spaces can address food insecurity, racial justice, and environmental sustainability, providing tools to deepen community engagement in the fight for a just and resilient future.

Increasing Capacity for Just Language: Native, Non-native, and Invasive Species Language and Frameworks

Room C197

Jillian Naveh, Lea Thali, Gabriella D'Erasmus, and Patricia Perone (NYC Parks)

Introduced species can bring up a variety of strong emotions for gardeners, environmental educators, restoration practitioners, and more. During this workshop, we consider how words like "invasive" convey cultural concepts that can be off-putting depending on one's lived experiences. We will also provide a starting point to explore how to build more inclusive, just, and scientifically sound communication practices. This session will pair with a presentation, including a historical analysis of invasion biology, with engaging exercises and interactive activities that will challenge accepted language and perspectives to create new frameworks for talking about invasive species.

Getting 'Into the Weeds' of Growing Your Community Garden

Room 6496

Jim Hackler (Five Points Farm, a community garden)

We'll expand on what was presented during the morning panel Roots of Partnership (Part 3): Sustaining Gardens Together. Jim Hackler will share his own garden's successes and incorporate small break-out sessions for everyone to share their own tips and challenges. Learn how joining your neighborhood association, hosting events, and leveraging your garden's story can transform volunteers into dedicated members.

Create a Rodent-Proof 3-Bin Composting System

Room 5382

Vipin Bharathan (West 123rd Street Community Garden)

Learn how to construct a sturdy, rodent-proof three-bin composting system for your community garden. The presentation will feature a construction diagram with step by step instructions accompanied by short videos, photos and a parts list with prices and suggestions on sourcing. We'll also discuss the advantages and challenges of a three bin system, as well as maintenance and on-going upkeep.

Thriving Together: Community Garden Renewal in NYC

Room 6494

Cindy Code and Scott Bills (Project EverGreen Foundation)

Community gardens are vital green spaces that provide environmental, social, and health benefits, but keeping them thriving requires teamwork. Explore the importance of collaboration in renovating, improving, and maintaining NYC's community gardens. Learn how to transform your garden with vibrant plants, raised vegetable beds, well-maintained trees, and accessible pathways that welcome visitors and foster engagement. We'll also discuss the Clean Air Calculator, an innovative tool that measures a garden's ability to sequester carbon and produce clean air, reinforcing the environmental value of green spaces.

Street Tree Care 101

Room C203

Rebecca Gonzalez and John Delgado (NYC Parks Stewardship)

Show your block a little TreeLC! City street trees provide countless social and ecological benefits. Explore the threats trees face in the urban environment and how volunteer stewards can play a crucial role in caring for and championing these vital assets.



School Garden Event Planning 101

Room C201

Patrick Evans (Greater Newark Conservancy)

Do you have a dream of hosting a school garden festival? Turning your school garden into a space filled with engaging, hands-on activities to connect them closer to their food and natural environment? Join us as we go over our tips for planning successful garden festivals at your school. We will share out planning documents, sample schedules, and pictures/videos that have documented the success of these events over the years.

Gardening for Climate Change

Room C202

Colleen Graves, Eve Brown, and Jinky Nogales (GrowNYC)

Explore how climate change affects growing zones, pests, extreme weather events, and more, while exploring solutions and ways to adapt to these new challenges. Examples of how these areas are affecting gardening at GrowNYC's Teaching Garden on Governor's Island will be shared along with avenues for adjusting your gardening techniques in the urban environment.

From Dirt to Digital: Tech Tools to Grow Your Farm Stand

Room 5383

Judith Desire (Uptown & Boogie Healthy Project)

This hands-on workshop helps gardeners, urban farmers, and community garden organizers improve their operations and outreach with digital tools. Tech-savvy garden members and those familiar with these tools but seeking advanced features will benefit the most. Participants will learn to use Slack for team communication, Google Workspace for collaboration, Canva for design, and Mailchimp for marketing more effectively.

Money, Money, Money: Corporate Funding Strategies That Work

Room 6495

Nessa Mogharreban (Denver Urban Gardens)

Drawing on real-world successes from the Denver Urban Gardens (DUG) playbook, this workshop will offer practical insights into how garden organizations can secure unrestricted corporate funding and leverage local partnerships to maximize long-term success. Through proven successful programs such as Garden and Food Forest Adoptions, Event and Educational Sponsorships, Paid Volunteer Opportunities, and Community Collaborations, participants will leave with actionable strategies to strengthen their organizations' financial sustainability.

Food History: Growing, Preserving, and Cooking Across Cultures

Room C205

Terri Carter (The University of Georgia Extension)

Our county is one of immigrants. Many of us have brought our culture with us on this journey to America. Growing food is not just an act in the present but also historical journey through time through food. We will dive deeper into how growing crops from different cultures allows us to honor our ancestors, pass down the knowledge of the ancestors, celebrate our ancestors, and honor the traditions. When we grow together and eat together, we celebrate the diversity of cultures present in our gardens, build meaningful relationships, learn about history, pass along recipes, and create lasting memories.

Neighbors Without Homes: Gardening Through the Housing Crisis

Room C198

Ben Helphand and Yaritza Guillen (NeighborSpace)

As welcoming, public spaces, community gardens can attract unhoused populations looking for a safe place to spend time and sometimes set up camp. These encampments can be challenging for garden groups, which hear complaints from neighbors about safety and public health. There is also a deep desire on the part of many garden leaders to help unhoused neighbors. NeighborSpace will share real world examples of how community gardens in Chicago have worked collaboratively – garden leaders, non-profits, city departments and elected officials – to navigate a humane approach to the unhoused that are making their home in the garden.

College Students in the Garden: Volunter Work, Internships, Grant-writing, and More

Room 6421

Chelsea Encababian and Dr. Preethi Radhakrishnan (LaGuardia Community College)

How can we build stronger bridges between urban farms, community gardens, and the next generation of urban farmers? LaGuardia Community College's Sustainable Urban Agriculture program is training students in closed-loop farming, food security, and climate resilience. Explore how urban growers can collaborate with LaGuardia students through micro-credentialing, internships, and work apprenticeships to build a stronger urban agriculture network. Participants will strategize how to engage students as farm crew members, grant collaborators, and garden stewards—turning education into action.

Panel

Unite, Uplift, and Amplify an Abundant Community Garden Movement **Proshansky Auditorium**

Moderator: Laura Lawson, Executive Dean of the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences (Rutgers University)

Panelists: Leslie Glover, Program Manager (United States Department of Agriculture's Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production), Cordalie Benoit, Vice President (American Community Garden Association), Linda Appel Lipsius, Executive Director (Denver Urban Gardens / The Urban Garden Project), Meredith Taylor, FCHS Educator (Rutgers Cooperative Extension)

With over 30,000 community gardens across the United States, supported by an estimated 3.6 million gardeners who produce 98 million pounds of food, this is a movement of scale and impact. As with all movements, collaboration, thought partnership, capacity building and advocacy are essential ingredients for success. Hear from key organizations supporting community gardens across the country.

Community Gardens Without Borders: Building Sanctuary for Immigrants **Recital Hall**

Moderator: Nancy Ortiz-Surun, Founder (La Finca del Sur)

Panelists: Aley Kent, Senior Technical Advisor (US New Roots Program, IRC), Priyanka Rajagopalan, Food and Agriculture Assistant, IRC New Roots in NYC, Carolina Saavedra, Owner (La Morada Restaurant) and Community Gardener (Bruckner Mott Haven Garden), Jean Lewis-Laldee, Community Gardener (Ponderosa Community Garden), Trang Dong, Community Gardens Manager (Mill City Grows)

Community gardens are safe, inclusive places for immigrant communities. We will bring together community gardeners and activists representing diasporas to discuss how community gardens offer food security and cultural connection, foster belonging, healing, and resilience in the face of marginalization. Panelists will share examples of institutional support and how green spaces serve as informal hubs for mutual aid, language exchange, education, civic engagement, trust, and solidarity.

Workshops

Resilient Gardens Project: Hands-On Activities for Climate Wise Garden Education **Room 6421**

Ashley Miller Helmholdt (Cornell Garden-Based Learning Program, Cornell University)

Learn more about our project and experience activity toolkits and social media to address barriers to our New York Seed to Supper program for groups most affected by food insecurity.

Growing and Managing a Native Perennial Garden **Room C205**

Jason Duverney-Gaspar and Chloe Hirschhorn (Edible Schoolyard NYC)

Join a hands-on workshop about attracting pollinators, beneficial insects, and migrating birds to your garden. Learn easy ways to find native perennials for various gardens in NYC. Design, management, and propagation will be covered to better understand how to use and manage native herbaceous perennials.

NYC Land-Based Healing Project **Room 6494**

Dr. Anna Ortega-Williams (NYC Land-Based Healing Project)

The NYC Land-Based Healing Project is an intergenerational, youth-centered, multi-disciplinary participatory research project. We aim to understand what land access means to Black youth, and youth of color, across our city. We study the role of urban agriculture in the well-being and intergenerational healing of Black youth and youth of color. We are a university-community based partnership of neighbors who are scholars, gardeners, farmers, organizers, leaders, social workers, and healers from across NYC. We will present our process of developing university-community partnership, methodology of building an oral history of land-based healing, and discuss implications for our practice to design collective approaches to mental health and well-being.

Engaging Young Minds in Community Gardens **Room C201**

Brittany Hoover (New York Agriculture in the Classroom)

Discover garden-based learning with New York Agriculture in the classroom! Discover free, garden-focused lessons from the Agricultural Literacy Curriculum Matrix that link students to food systems, sustainability, and hands-on STEM. Use ready-made resources in your community garden to foster food literacy, environmental stewardship, and appreciation for agriculture. Leave with tools, activities, and strategies to inspire future gardeners and food-aware citizens.

Friday Session 3 (Con't)

2:45 P.M.–3:45 P.M.



Stewardship Engagement Strategies

Room 5382

Carolyn Egan (Department of Environmental Protection)

The NYC Department of Environmental Protection's Rain Garden Community Coordinators will cover different outreach and engagement strategies that they have utilized that can help grow community involvement in environmental programs.

Community-Powered Seed Discovery: Growing Resilient Crops Together

Room C204

Nicolas Enjalbert (SeedLinked)

Join us for an interactive workshop on how gardeners and farmers can help shape the future of resilient crops through citizen science! In partnership with USDA Seed Banks and SeedLinked, this initiative invites you to grow, observe, and share insights on unique seed varieties that can withstand climate change, pests, and diseases. Whether you're a beginner or a seasoned grower, discover how you can make an impact—one seed at a time! Learn how your participation contributes to identifying climate-adapted crops, preserving genetic diversity, and strengthening food security.

State-Wide Resources for Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture

Room 6495

Kendall Hough and Steven Affat (NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets)

Join a conversation about NYS state programs, grants, and resources available for community gardeners and urban growers. Learn about applying for grants, tips for overcoming regulatory hurdles, the role of the Community Garden Task Force, and success stories from organizations across NYS that have leveraged public funding to build sustainable programming.

See the Forest in your Street Tree

Room C203

Nina Browne (Brooklyn Botanic Garden)

Trees thrive when they are part of a diverse, interconnected forest community of life above and below ground. Yet trees in cities rely on people to co-create healthy urban ecosystems. Be inspired to deeply observe the ways forest communities show up in tree beds. Learn best practices for gardening like a forest so that your community and its trees can thrive together.

Gardens for the Housed, Housing-insecure, Unhoused, and Formerly Unhoused

Room C198

Marion Yuen (The MYA Group), Alicia Grullón (People's Cultural Plan), Cody Israel (Walt L. Shamel Community Garden), Audrey Jenkins (NYC Department of Homeless Services), Tom Angotti (Prospect Farm), and Rob Robinson (Parsons School of Design)

Urban heat island effect, food and housing insecurity, need for sense of place, safety, and neighborhood changes due to displacement, immigration, and migration all converge on our community gardens. What can we do about needs with no cookie-cutter solutions? How can visitors and gardeners of various housing statuses, garden leaders, and community neighbors navigate complex relationships and practical issues? Participate in a conversation of pointers and guidelines for respectful win-win conversations and practical next steps.

Garden Placemaking Wisdom Around the World

Room C202

Ryan Smolar (PlacemakingUS)

Explore how community gardens around the world serve as dynamic public spaces through thoughtful design and engaging programming. Learn how gardens become social hubs by using welcoming entryways, communal gathering areas, educational installations, and multifunctional spaces to support food production, cultural expression, and community resilience. Case studies from global contexts will showcase innovative approaches. Attendees will co-design strategies for making gardens inclusive, lively, and self-sustaining, ensuring they remain active year-round with programming such as intergenerational learning, seasonal festivals, and market pop-ups.

Cultivating Conversations so we Bloom Together

Room 6496

Robert Galinsky (GalinskyCoaching.com)

Effective communication is the backbone of any thriving community. Whether sharing gardening tips, organizing events, or simply enjoying each other's company, this workshop will equip gardeners with the exciting new skills to connect more deeply and work together seamlessly and with joy. This session will enhance the way you share your knowledge, insights, and perspectives within your garden community.

Saturday Program

Morning

Check-in

8:00 A.M.–9:15 A.M.

Lobby of Recital Hall

Opening Ceremony with Keynote Address

9:15 A.M.–10:15 A.M.

Proshansky Auditorium (C Level)

Session 1

10:30 A.M.–11:45 P.M.

Finding Your Place: Knowing the Land We're On

Panel in the Proshansky Auditorium

Growing Gardeners: Engaging Children in a Garden

Room 8400

Cultivating from Cuttings

Room C202

Creating a Community-Activated Food Forest for Food-Insecure Populations

Room 5383

Native Plants and Forest Gardens for Food, Medicine, Habitat, and Crafts

Room 5382

The Power of Elderberry!

Room 9205

Gardens and Food Forests: A Match Made in Nature

Room C198

Introduction to Problem Solving with Plants

Room 8402

HotBox Composting with Youth Engagement

C203

Introducción al Compostaje Comunitario (Intro to Community Composting)

C205

Urban Mushroom Farming in Harlem

Room 6495

Turning Trash into Gold: Composting Basics for you Garden

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Farming Concrete: Why Data Collection Matters

Room 6494

Belonging in Community Gardens: Supporting Diverse Growing and Culinary Traditions with Specialized Seed Collections

Room 6417

The Desert Farmer, a story about food, people and hope

Room 6496

Designing Green Spaces in Urban Communities to Address Environmental Stress and Educational Development

Room 6421

Garden Meditation

Room 8203

Biodiversity in the Soil and in the Gut: A Recipe for Health

Room C197

Movement for Pain-Free Gardening: Sowing Seeds of Strength

Room 8301

Herbarium Verbarium

Room 9206

Nurturing Sacred Joy in the Garden

Room 9207

Cultivating Communities: A Collaborative Program for Rural Community Gardens in South Carolina

Room C204

Lunchtime Workshop: Climate Resilient Green Infrastructure Designs

11:45 A.M.–1:00 P.M.

Room 6494

Session 2

1:00 P.M.–2:15 P.M.

Large Scale Support for Community Gardens: A Conversation with City Based Garden Programs

Panel in the Proshansky Auditorium

Weathering Water: Practices for Community Gardens in Extreme Climate Events

Panel in the Recital Hall

Cultivating Wellness in Military Community Gardens

Room 6496

Compost at Home with Worms

Room C203

Routes to Shoots: Designing Effective Garden Walkways

Room 6421

Unconventional Gardening Strategies for Urban Spaces

Room 8400

Creating Habitat for Pollinators with Native Plants

Room C201

Eating Outside the Box: A Case for (Safely) Eating the Wild Plants Growing Outside the Garden Bed

Room 5382

DIY Compost Socks

Room C202

Using a Microscope as a Tool for Monitoring Soil Health

Room 8304

Think Beyond the Plot: Community Gardens as Hubs of Culture and Connection

Room 6495

Before you get started...

Room 8301

Saturday Program

Strengthening Community Food Resilience with GeoGardenClub: A New Tool for Garden Planning, Resource Sharing, and Local Collaboration

Room 6494

Seeds of the African Diaspora

Room C198

Community Composting for Soil Regeneration in Borikén

Room C205

Ritualizing Your Time in Your Garden

Room C197

Put your Garden on the Winter Garden Green Map!

Room 8402

Conflict Resolution in Community Gardens

Room 5417

The Great American (Garden) Songbook

Room 8203

Prodigy Grillin' Greens

Room 9207

Blooming Beauty: Your Plant-Powered Path to Radiant Skin & Hair

Room 9205

Make your Own Multi-purpose Cleaner: Eco Enzyme!

Room 9602

Making Kefir: Sharing and Preserving Traditional Recipes in an Age of Industrial Food

Room 6417

Reparative Agriculture: Cultivating Leadership through Cultural Education

Room C204

**Session 3
2:30 P.M.–3:45 P.M.**

Fighting Fire: Resiliency and recovery in Community Gardens and Green Spaces

Panel in the Proshansky Auditorium

Turning Up the Heat: The Impact of Rising Air Temperatures on Urban Agriculture and Community Gardens

Panel in the Recital Hall

Insects: Can I Kill Them All?

Room C197

Seed Starting for Broke People

Room C205

Urban Soil Sustainability and Best Management Practices

Room C204

Intro to Community Composting

Room 8402

From Trash to Treasure: Composting for a Thriving Garden

Room C203

Pollinator Power: A Pollinator Habitat Pilot in Baltimore City

Room C201

Social Media Hacks For Your Garden

Room 5383

Adapting a Nationwide Garden-To-Table Program for Native American Communities

Room 6496

Grantwriting 101: A Guide to CitizensNYC Community Leaders Grant

Room 6495

Cross-Cultural Collaboration for Garden-Based Health and Well-Being

Room 5417

Breathing in Rhythm with the Earth: Nourishing Ourselves and the Earth amidst Climate Grief

Room 5382

Soundbath Mindfulness Meditation for All

Room 8203

Soft Life in Practice: Yin Herbs and Rituals for Fiery Times

Room 9205

Connection to Nature Through a Cup of Tea

Room C198

A Wellbeing Index to Measure Community Garden Impact, Carrying Capacity, and Direct Investment

Room 6494

Branch Out! Co-Creating Living Willow Sanctuaries with Your Community

Room 9206

DIY Nature Pocketbook

Room 8301

Spinning and Cordage with Plant Fiber

Room C202

Medicinal, Culinary, and Aromatic Herbs of the Northern Hemisphere

Room 8400

Cultivating Oyster Mushrooms for Community Gardens: The 5-Gallon Bucket Method

Room 6417

Discovering Herbs: A Gardener's Journey

Room 6421

From the Gut: Kimchi Conversations

Room 9207

Saturday, June 7

Session 1

10:30 A.M.–11:45 A.M.



Panel

Finding Your Place: Knowing the Land We're On **Proshansky Auditorium**

Moderator: Karen Washington, Farmer and Community Gardener (Rise & Root Community Farm)

Panelists: Robin Wall Kimmerer (Plant Ecologist, Educator, Writer, MacArthur Fellow), Betty Lyons Hill, Executive Director (American Indian Law Alliance), Yonette Fleming, Vice President (Hattie Carthan Community Garden), Kofi Thomas, Founder (The Good Life Garden) and Director (The People's Garden)

What does it mean to really be in place? How can we understand the land — including the ecological, historical, social, and political context — of where we garden? How can we ensure we are relating to the land, and to the many people and beings who share the land with us, in good ways?

Workshops

Cultivating from Cuttings **Room C202**

Nick Storrs (Homegrown Kitchen Gardens)

Do you want to learn how to make more plants from the ones you and your friends are already growing? Welcome to the wonderful world of cultivating from cuttings! Here we will learn the basics of vegetative propagation, how and why you might want to use it in your garden to grow more perennials for years to come.

Creating a Community-Activated Food Forest for Food-Insecure Populations

Room 5383

Ramsey McPhillips and Charlene Doland (Edible Landscapes of Yamhill County, edibleyamhill.org)

Learn about the Bounty Park ecosystem, an organic food forest designed to support local food-insecure populations. Following the presentation, participants will break into small groups to design their own food forests using the seven-layer food forest model and various plant guild combinations.

Native Plants and Forest Gardens for Food, Medicine, Habitat, and Crafts

Room 5382

Adam Walker (The Battery Conservancy - Battery Urban Farm)

Learn frameworks and resources to help select native plants for your garden site at any scale. Explore the concepts of niches, functional diversity, plant guilds, and succession. We'll highlight northeast native plants that provide multiple benefits for wildlife and people.

The Power of Elderberry!

Room 9205

April Gopie

Join this hands-on experience with the elderberry plant. Discover elderberry trees in NYC, and learn tips on how to make your own elderberry syrup. We'll cover the origin of the elder shrub/tree, its characteristics, where it can be found, the lifecycle (from plant to fruiting), uses, benefits, and cautions.

Gardens and Food Forests: A Match Made in Nature

Room C198

Creighton Hofeditz (Denver Urban Gardens)

Existing community garden networks can be leveraged to support food forest projects complementary to gardens and can be easier to install and raise money to support. With Denver Urban Gardens' Food Forest Program as a case study, we'll learn the advantages and challenges of creating food forests, and how they can serve a diverse set of goals and contexts. Using an observation and analysis of natural systems we'll show why food forests are an essential part of a local food ecosystem. Includes designs, budget sheets, plant lists, and images of food forests, with a Q&A session.

Introduction to Problem Solving with Plants

Room 8402

Josephine Gasperi and Justin Russinko (Perception Horticulture)

This lecture and workshop will discuss urban horticulture and other seemingly difficult locations, along with ideas of how to overcome the challenges they present. Additionally, we'll discuss how to find and connect with one's local horticultural community. You'll walk away with several resources, references, and are also encouraged to share their own expertise for communal discussion.



HotBox Composting with Youth Engagement

Room C203

Nando Rodriguez, Zayneb Saab, and Youth Alumnus (The Brotherhood Sister Sol)

“HotBox Composting” systems can compost as much as 1,000 pounds in two months, solving our organic waste issue without taking up a lot of space or time, and resulting in nutritious, precious compost. With a focus in restorative justice, Nando is working to take local composting to another level of community support and push local representatives to deepen participation in NYC while connecting youth in Harlem to the soil.

Introducción al Compostaje Comunitario (Intro to Community Composting)

Room C205

Natalia Sucre & Lia Lucero (The NYC Community Compost Network)

¿Te cuesta reciclar tus restos de comida o acceder a un punto de entrega de compost? ¿Te interesa hacer compost para tu jardín, plantas de interior o árboles urbanos? Este taller te guiará en lo esencial para gestionar un sistema de compostaje a pequeña escala y fomentar la participación comunitaria. Aprenderás cómo involucrar a tus vecinos en el compostaje y descubrirás estrategias prácticas para encontrar espacios para esfuerzos de compostaje comunitario.

Urban Mushroom Farming in Harlem

Room 6495

Shanon Morris, David Nunuz (Farmer) and Zach Kalas (Harlem Grown)

Hands-on exploration of urban mushroom farming, for beginners, urban gardeners, and sustainability enthusiasts who want to learn how to cultivate gourmet and medicinal mushrooms in small spaces using low-cost, sustainable methods. Gain insight into the biology of fungi, growing techniques suited for urban environments, and the potential for mushrooms as a local food source or business venture. Whether you're looking to grow mushrooms for personal use, community food security, or entrepreneurship, this workshop will provide you with the skills and confidence to get started.

Turning Trash into Gold: Composting Basics for your Garden

Room C201

T Zoeckler (Queens Botanical Garden)

Join the Queens Botanical Garden Compost Team to learn how composting can build resilience in your soil and in your communities. We'll be discussing the challenges that the changing climate and the changing landscape of gardening in NYC present, and how we can meet those with local composting systems. Whether you have years of experience composting or are just interested in getting started, our conversation about the scientific and social impact of compost will have information you can take back to your gardens and homes.

Belonging in Community Gardens: Supporting Diverse Growing and Culinary Traditions with Specialized Seed Collections

Room 6417

Shay Moon (Denver Urban Gardens)

Learn about the case study of DUG's Culturally Inclusive Seeds programs as a model for supporting diverse growing and culinary traditions in our community by crowd-sourcing plant variety requests to form a catalog of hard-to-access-or-afford seed varieties appropriate to the local climate.

The Desert Farmer, A Story About Food, People and Hope

Room 6496

James Gardner (Positive Direction for Youth and Families Community Garden)

This session will be a screening of a short Documentary, “The Desert Farmer” and a Q&A session. The documentary is about the work of James Gardner in the East side of Greensboro, NC. and highlights the very real issues of food access, grassroots efforts by the Black Faith-based community, education, partnerships, funding and more.

Designing Green Spaces in Urban Communities to Address Environmental Stress and Educational Development

Room 6421

David L. Holmes and Hakiema Batemon (Hood Humanitarian)

Explore the correlation between environmental stress and its effects on urban communities and educational development. By the end, you will gain a deeper understanding of how creating green spaces can reverse behaviors associated with environmental stress and promote learning development.

Saturday Session 1(Con't)

10:30 A.M.–11:45 A.M.



Garden Meditation

Room 8203

Dr. Eileen J. Ain (LaGuardia Corner Community Garden)

Meditating in a community garden brings new perspectives and depth to daily life. We welcome all levels of practice. During our session you are invited to participate in the breathing practices inherent in all types of meditation. Following our session there is opportunity to share spontaneous written narrative.

Biodiversity in the Soil and in the Gut: A Recipe for Health

Room C197

Enrica Sacca and Kele Nkhereanye (Plant Powered Metro New York)

The gut microbiome is teeming with trillions of microorganisms that are meant to live symbiotically within us, yet Western dietary patterns have reduced the biodiversity, in parallel with a loss of soil biodiversity through industrialized agriculture. Learn about the role of eating whole plant foods in restoring gut health and even reversing chronic disease, hear real stories of health resurgence, and experience a brief food demo centering the bounty of the earth.

Movement for Pain-Free Gardening: Sowing Seeds of Strength

Room 8301

HanaKyle Moranz (Walt L. Shamel Community Garden)

Gardening is physical labor! Come practice movements that focus on strengthening muscles used when gardening, like digging and weeding. You'll safely build strength for squatting, standing, pushing, and pulling, and leave with a handout to continue training on your own. Whether you've experienced chronic pain or you want tools for injury prevention, this workshop is for you. No special experience needed - all are welcome!

Herbarium Verbarium

Room 9206

Sherese Francis (Paradise Community Garden)

Participants will create their own nature and herbarium journals inspired by the work of Sarah Mapps Douglass, who was a Black Philadelphian woman in the 19th century who had an interest in mineralogy and nature journaling.

Nurturing Sacred Joy in the Garden

Room 9207

Sung Kim and Ray Pultinas (James Baldwin Outdoor Learning Center)

With hands-on activities explore making herbal vinegar and oxymel using wild medicinals, many of which are so-called common "weeds" that grow abundantly in our region and in NYC. Learn to identify some of the most valuable plants that grow around us and their health benefits. Sample homemade medicinal products; salves, oils, tinctures, and wild pestos. We will encourage participants to share their stories of joy interacting with plants and wild beings in the garden.

Cultivating Communities: A Collaborative Program for Rural Community Gardens in South Carolina

Room C204

Amy L. Dabbs (Clemson Extension School & Community Gardening), Ken Harvin (SCACED)

Participants will discover how community gardens foster collaboration, wellness, and food security in rural communities in South Carolina. We will highlight examples from the partnership between Clemson Extension and the South Carolina Association for Community and Economic Development (SCACED). Attendees will gain insights into building partnerships and engaging diverse communities.

Farming Concrete: Why Data Collection Matters

Room 6494

Ranya Perez, Bruce Zeines, and Sheryll Durrant (Farming Concrete)

Learn how community gardeners can collect data to demonstrate their impact. This free, open-source platform helps growers track harvests, composting, community engagement, and more. Learn practical strategies for using record keeping data to advocate for resources, strengthen networks, and tell the story of your garden's contributions.

Saturday Session 1(Con't)

10:30 A.M.–11:45 A.M.



Growing Gardeners: Engaging Children in a Garden

Room 8400

Sara Kempton and Lindsey Kriaris (Van Cortlandt Park Alliance)

Time to learn, touch, draw, observe, and use gardens as exploration areas for children. Modeled after Van Cortlandt Park Alliance's weekend Growing Gardeners program, this workshop showcases types of garden based hands-on crafts, observation opportunities, and science-based inquiry activities. As participants move through the activities VCPA staff will discuss how each activity builds confidence, skills, and knowledge in our youngest visitors.

Lunchtime Workshop

11:00 A.M.–12:00 P.M.

Climate Resilient Green Infrastructure

Room 6494

Rosemarie Miner and Bella Thorpe (OUR TEMENOS)

Participants will learn about technical information and available resources to bring green infrastructure projects to life. Green infrastructure projects can improve a garden's capacity to absorb stormwater and support local ecology. We will present several case studies outlining the methods of collaboration, design process, and installation techniques. We will also workshop around the shifts necessary to move toward more circular systems of community collaboration and resource sharing highlighting examples from our work and exploring practices that help us rewrite personal narratives around competition versus collaboration.

Saturday Session 2

1:00 P.M.–2:15 P.M.



Panel

Large Scale Support for Community Gardens: A Conversation with City Based Garden Programs

Proshansky Auditorium

Moderator: Anthony Reuter, Assistant Director, Planning & Programs (NYC Parks GreenThumb)

Panelists: Michelle Nelson, Community Garden Program Manager (Montgomery Parks), Letisha Golafaie, Community Gardens Project Manager (The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society), Alicia Choi, Community Garden Coordinator (City of Seattle's P-Patch Program), Barbara Gross, Community Garden Coordinator (Minneapolis Park & Recreation)

Join Parks and non-profit staff from across the country for a conversation on best practices for sustaining large-scale urban community gardening programs. Panelists will share innovations and strategies in garden protection, funding, and governance, offering insights from diverse cities and contexts.

Weathering Water: Practices for Community Gardens in Extreme Climate Events

Recital Hall

Moderator: Patricia James, Community Garden Manager (Grow Food Northampton Organic Community Garden)

Panelists: Shino Tanikawa, Executive Director (NYC Soil & Water Conservation District), Mary Mattingly, Artist, Charles Krezell, President (Loisaida United Neighborhood Gardens)

This panel recognizes all water related extreme weather events around the United States and how to best ensure resiliency of our community gardens. In addition, the conversation will consider how to collectively discuss trauma associated with extreme weather events and how to build social resilience.

Workshops

Ritualizing Your Time in Your Garden

Room C197

Osiris Mancera (Denver Urban Gardens)

Learn about the ways gardeners and community members can engage with their garden or growing space year-round. Explore holistic approaches to meditation and movement using the senses, including a tea meditation and chair yoga. Participants will learn about garden journaling and how writing/drawing can enhance their experience in nature.

Saturday Session 2 (Con't)

1:00 P.M.–2:15 P.M.



Put your Garden on the Winter Garden Green Map!

Room 8402

Wendy Brawer (Green Map System)

What do you do in your community garden in winter? Share it here! Let's chart our cool weather garden culture, mapped out across the continent together. Think back a few months. Select icons for holiday events, decorations, and lighting; snow play and snow shoveling. There's soil building, seed saving, bulb planting, pruning and street tree care, grant writing, planning, repairs and more. Share your garden's winter highlights and help change perceptions about the seasonality of community gardens.

Conflict Resolution in Community Gardens

Room 5417

Diana Campos-Jimenez (LA Neighborhood Land Trust)

This session will equip you with practical tools and strategies to address and resolve conflicts constructively, fostering a harmonious and collaborative garden environment. Through interactive activities and real-life scenarios, you'll learn communication techniques, mediation skills, and ways to build trust among gardeners. Whether you're a garden leader, volunteer, or member, this workshop will empower you to create a more inclusive and supportive space where everyone can thrive.

The Great American (Garden) Songbook

Room 8203

Don Boekelheide (Reedy Creek Community Garden, Charlotte, NC)

In community gardening, "community" comes first. Making music together can be as valuable for growing community as good compost is for healthy soil. Let's share songs that inspire our movement and lift our voices together.

Blooming Beauty: Your Plant-Powered Path to Radiant Skin & Hair

Room 9205

Gioya DeSouza-Fennelly and Sabrina Fennelly (Aspen Acres)

With the rise of plant-based beauty and its environmental, health, ethical benefits, it is important to understand what we put on our skin and hair. We will debunk common myths about natural beauty and explore key plant-based ingredients (e.g., aloe vera, coconut oil, shea butter, essential oils, botanical extracts) that can all be grown in your garden space! Discuss of the importance of reading ingredient labels when purchasing products and view a demonstration of how to make your own plant based products.

Prodigy Grillin' Greens

Room 9207

Taja D. (The Prodigy House Project)

Come learn about the vast variety of greens that grow in the Northeast and their many health benefits. Participants will taste samples and learn how best to make leafy greens part of their diet.

Making Kefir: Sharing and Preserving Traditional Recipes in an Age of Industrial Food

Room 6417

Shannon Valdes and Tai Montanarella (New York Botanical Garden)

Traditional food knowledge and preparation methods can be lost through commercial production, decreasing the nutritional value of foods and disconnecting people from their culture and the origins of foods they eat. In this session participants will make kefir, a fermented milk product from Eurasia, and reflect on the environmental and social benefits of reconnecting with our family recipes.

Make your Own Multi-purpose Cleaner: Eco Enzyme!

Room 9206

Antterly Chen (Department of Education)

Learn how to make your own eco-enzyme from your left over vegetable and fruit scraps to purify the air we breathe, the water we drink and the soil to grow healthy food! This workshop will offer a step-by-step guide for making our own multi-purpose cleaning products.

Cultivating Wellness in Military Community Gardens

Room 6496

Andrea Muffly (Fort Story Community Garden)

Participants will explore strategies to maintain a vibrant, volunteer-run community garden, even in transient settings. Learn how to keep plots occupied, use social media for connection, and ensure transparency and consistency in operations. Participants will also discover how gardening can enhance physical and mental health, foster social engagement, stimulate cognitive skills, and create purposeful activities. Gain insights into adapting the garden environment to be inclusive and learn how to use gardening as a therapeutic tool to benefit all participants and strengthen the sense of community.

Saturday Session 2 (Con't)

1:00 P.M.–2:15 P.M.



Compost at Home with Worms

Room C203

Echo Hertzberg (LES Ecology Center), Zoe Arcidiacono (New York Botanical Garden's Bronx Green-Up)

Learn about the amazing world of vermicompost—composting with worms—and how to start at home! Vermicomposting recycles food scraps and produces a highly nutritious soil amendment. We'll offer an overview of the history of vermicomposting, worm biology, how to build your own worm bin, and troubleshooting issues. Beginner and experienced worm stewards are invited to bring their knowledge and questions. You will get your own bin and worms to take home (while supplies last)!

Routes to Shoots: Designing Effective Garden Walkways

Room 6421

Flannery Pearson-Clarke and Rachel Cochran (Food Well Alliance)

As you grow and maintain your community garden, you'll spend a great deal of time moving through the walkways, largely overlooked in garden design. From laying out garden beds for accessible maneuvering, to considering the pros and cons of different walkway materials and designing welcoming entrances, this workshop will have you thinking more closely about the ways we navigate in our community gardens.

Unconventional Gardening Strategies for Urban Spaces

Room 8400

James Gardner (Positive Direction for Youth and Families Community Garden)

Explore innovative approaches to urban agriculture to address food security, environmental sustainability, and community engagement in underserved areas. Participants will learn how to adapt unconventional gardening techniques such as hydroponics, aquaponics, raised bed growing, container gardening, and no-till farming to maximize production in limited spaces, engage diverse communities, and create sustainable, resilient gardening models.

Creating Habitat for Pollinators with Native Plants

Room C201

Jason Bonet (New York Botanical Garden's Bronx Green-Up), Chrissy Word (Butterfly Project NYC, NYC Pollinator Working Group)

With a focus on the challenges of climate, learn about the importance of our local pollinators, how to expand habitat that attracts and supports them - and how they will benefit your garden.

Eating Outside the Box: A Case for (Safely) Eating the Wild Plants Growing Outside the Garden Bed

Room 5382

Nathan Hunter (NYC Parks / Bronx River Alliance), Journei Bimwala Get to know the edible plants growing outside your garden box. Participants will learn about the Bronx River Foodway, an edible food forest in Concrete Plant, where community members are allowed to forage. Participants will meet five weedy but nutritious wild edible plants common to our gardens and how to safely forage them for meals. Participants will help build a "foraged salad" made from safely harvested wild edible plants.

DIY Compost Socks

Room C202

Tate Torello and Claudia Diaz Pina (Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden)

Transform any growing bed by amending the soil with compost, top dressing, or even using compost socks. Compost socks control stormwater and soil erosion, slow the decomposition of compost so it feeds the soil bed for months to come, and can repurpose some materials that would otherwise clog up our landfills. Use compost from the Queens Botanical Garden to create your compost sock (while supplies last)!

Using a Microscope as a Tool for Monitoring Soil Health

Room 8304

Simeon Kleinsasser (Hiwassee Products)

Learn about the different parts of a microscope and explain what each one does and why it is needed. We will cover the different morphology of the soil food web we will be looking to identify and then look at different compost and soil samples together. We will also cover the basics of vermicomposting and how to make your own compost extracts.

Think Beyond the Plot: Community Gardens as Hubs of Culture and Connection

Room 6495

Kelly Wood and Gayle Mills (San Carlos Community Garden)

Learn about the strategies that have sparked deep community pride and engagement through volunteerism at San Carlos Community Garden in San Diego. Participants will learn how a community-curated vision, intentional design, and inclusive programming transformed what was once abandoned public land into a thriving space for the community, sustaining both the garden and its people.



Before you get started...

Room 8301

Charles S. Vasser (Bissel Gardens)

Learn essential organizational skills for community gardening. We'll cover everything from managing the garden to communicating with fellow gardeners and planning plots. Plus, we'll discuss winter decision-making and more. This workshop will equip you with the skills you need to thrive in the garden, from before the growing season starts to after it ends.

Strengthening Community Food Resilience with GeoGardenClub: A New Tool for Garden Planning, Resource Sharing, and Local Collaboration

Room 6494

Jenna D (Geo Garden Club)

GeoGardenClub is a powerful tool designed to help gardeners grow more food, strengthen local networks, and share resources with their communities. In this interactive workshop, participants will learn how to use the platform to streamline garden planning, track observations, connect with nearby gardeners, and exchange surplus harvests and resources. Step-by-step guidance will be provided on downloading the app, setting up an account, creating a garden, adding plantings, exploring the local crop directory, recording observations, and sharing excess produce with other gardeners. Attendees will leave with a digital network of New York City gardeners and receive a free one-year subscription to GeoGardenClub.

Seeds of the African Diaspora

Room C198

Kimberly Curtis (By Our Hands)

Explore the history and benefits of three edible plants of the African diaspora. Luffas, roselle, and one surprise star will be featured on this journey. We'll conclude with a seed saving demonstration and everyone will leave with seeds for their garden.

Community Composting for Soil Regeneration in Borikén

Room C205

Yvette Núñez Sepúlveda (Coalition for the Restoration of the Ecosystems in Santurce)

Dig into case studies and partnerships in San Juan, Culebra, and Yabucoa in Borikén (Puerto Rico), circular economy in urban gardens, and geotherapy. How can we recycle organics for soil regeneration for the ecosystems in our communities?

Reparative Agriculture: Cultivating Leadership through Cultural Education

Room C204

Justin Nickelson (HABESHA, Inc. / HABESHA Gardens Complex (HGC)), Renee Smith-Nickelson (SoilDeep Strategies)

The concept of Reparative Agriculture is a tool to influence people of African Ancestry to utilize agriculture to heal and empower themselves from the negative effects of the Trans-Atlantic and Arab Human trafficking, Jim Crow, Colonialism, and Neo-Colonialism. This workshop will discuss how HABESHA, Inc. leverages the Reparative Agriculture principles through land stewardship and facilitating agriculture-based training programs at the HABESHA Gardens Complex (HGC) community garden to educate and inspire people of African Ancestry to be community leaders in the Black Food Sovereignty movement.



Panel

Fighting Fire: Resiliency and recovery in Community Gardens and Green Spaces

Proshansky Auditorium

Moderator: Teague Weybright, Community Gardens Program

Coordinator (City of Santa Monica Community Gardens Program)

Panelists: Kip Stein, Director of Natural Areas Management (NYC Parks), George Mercer, Governing Board (San Carlos Community Garden), Diana Campos-Jimenez, Lead Community Organizer (Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust)

Community Gardens and Public Green Space are a place of social support and agricultural rebirth amidst the climate change-fueled increase in brush fires across the country. They can be spaces of healing for those impacted by these catastrophic events and an opportunity for relief and recovery. Learn about the impact of fires on community greenspaces, best practices for preventing fires in your community garden and parks, and how these critical pieces of infrastructure can be a space for recovery and regeneration.

Turning Up the Heat: The Impact of Rising Air Temperatures on Urban Agriculture and Community Gardens

Recital Hall

Moderator: Yolanda Gonzalez, Urban Agriculture Specialist (Cornell Cooperative Extension)

Panelist: Savanna Shelnutt, Ag Climate Resiliency Specialist (Cornell Cooperative Extension), Jason Bonet, Horticulturalist (New York Botanical Garden), Aja Two Crows, Community Initiatives Associate (NYC Climate Exchange)

This panel explores the intersection of climate change and urban agriculture, with a particular focus on how ambient air temperature shifts affect community gardens, small-scale growers, and green spaces in cities. Community gardens serve as vital resources—not only for fresh food, but for social connection, ecological literacy, and climate resilience. But as cities heat up, these spaces are grappling with extreme weather, unpredictable growing seasons, and a silent but significant force: rising ambient air temperatures. Join us for a conversation on how climate-driven temperature shifts are transforming the landscape of urban agriculture—and how communities are adapting in response.

Workshops

Branch Out! Co-Creating Living Willow Sanctuaries with Your Community

Room 9206

Aresh Javadi (AreshEarth)

Join beloved environmental justice artist and community garden champion Aresh Javadi (aka AreshEarth) for a hands-on, heart-rooted journey into the world of living willow structures—where art, ecology, and sacred geometry meet! Participants will dive into the magic of willow weaving as a tool for urban transformation and community collaboration. After a dose of inspiration, you'll team up with fellow green dreamers to sketch, model, and storytell your very own living willow installation.

DIY Nature Pocketbook

Room 8301

Elena D'Amanda and Marisa DeDominicis (Earth Matter NY)

Make your own garden pocketbook! Using reclaimed materials (magazines, newspapers, seed catalogs) participants will create and decorate a pocketbook that they can use to collect natural objects such as leaves, stones, seeds, etc. This activity is easy to replicate as a hands-on activity for all ages during community garden open hours.

Spinning and Cordage with Plant Fiber

Room C202

Sofia van Leeuwen (Prospect Heights Community Farm)

Handspinning of cellulose is a restorative practice. Locally grown monocot and dicot plants will be provided as bast fibers. Participants are invited to learn about retting, rolags, punis, dressing a distaff, and drafting with a spindle. By joining together – transforming handspun fiber into cordage – we will reflect and intertwine with the plant world.

Medicinal, Culinary, and Aromatic Herbs of the Northern Hemisphere

Room 8400

Emily DiGiovanni (Plant Ritual)

Through hands-on activities and demonstrations, we will design a simple medicinal garden, learn how to propagate perennial herbs, and make herbal teas. We'll share a variety of products made from both the garden and from foraging in nature. Traditional and generational plant uses will be in dialogue. We will also delve into medicinal and culinary plants found in our ecosystems, their importance to people and wildlife, and how to ethically forage when permitted.



Cultivating Oyster Mushrooms for Community Gardens: The 5-Gallon Bucket Method

Room 6417

Kim Yim (Pleasant Village Community Garden)

Learn how to grow delicious, nutrient-rich mushrooms in 5-gallon buckets using simple, low-tech methods perfect for community gardens. This hands-on workshop will cover everything from selecting the right mushroom spawn to preparing the appropriate substrate for that species, inoculating, and caring for your crop. Discover how mushroom cultivation can complement your garden, improve soil health, and provide fresh food for your community. Whether you're a beginner or an experienced gardener, this workshop will equip you with the skills to start growing mushrooms in shared garden spaces with minimal effort and maximum yield.

Discovering Herbs: A Gardener's Journey

Room 6421

Nancy Kreith (University of Illinois Extension/Master Gardener Herb Demonstration Garden)

Learn about diverse cultural herbs and their ideal growing conditions, with examples from our very own Chicagoland herb demonstration garden. We'll also discuss overwintering techniques for some tropical varieties. Discover how to create engaging interpretive signage for self-guided garden tours. Finally, participate in a demonstration of a simple herb drying method and create a lavender sachet with flower buds and orris root (natural preservative).

From the Gut: Kimchi Conversations

Room 9207

Jae Y Lee and Friends (Grow Beautiful)

Kimchi Conversations is an educational gathering where we center cross-cultural dialogue around fermentation while learning how to make seasonal kimchi from the garden. Kimchi goes beyond just being delicious and a source of good probiotics. In this workshop, participants will learn how to make kimchi, why it's good for you, and exchange fermentation recipes and stories between different cultures.

Insects: Can I Kill Them All?

Room C197

Charlie A. Monroe II. (CobbPARKS), Shemekia Mosley (USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service)

Some insects are harmful to garden crops and some insects are beneficial. To best manage the impact of insects in your garden you first need to be able to properly identify the insect and then learn solutions to best manage the insects. Participants will learn ways to discourage harmful insects from entering their garden along with tips to attract beneficial insects.

Seed Starting for Broke People

Room C205

Fareed Anderson-Beyah (Former Garden Coordinator of McKinley's Children's Garden)

Start seeds that you saved from past growing seasons or purchased from the store on a very low budget. Limited supplies will be shared at the workshop to have your own low-budget seed starting kit, while supplies last.

Urban Soil Sustainability and Best Management Practices

Room C204

George Lozefski (New York City Soil & Water Conservation District / Urban Soils Institute)

Soil science is an important and growing field, essential to address climate change issues and urban development. Soil tests can give gardeners critical information about their soil quality and soil health. Participants will learn how to interpret soil test results, what the levels of contamination mean for their health, and how to safely mitigate exposure to contaminated soils in their gardens and green spaces.

Intro to Community Composting

Room 8402

Lena Frey (The NYC Community Composting Network), Elena Tinschert (Big Reuse)

This workshop will guide you through the essentials of managing a small-scale compost system and fostering community involvement. Learn how to engage neighbors in composting and discover practical strategies for finding spaces for community composting efforts.



From Trash to Treasure: Composting for a Thriving Garden

Room C203

Renée Padmore-Baccus (Healthy Hands of Harvest)

Participants will learn how to transform everyday waste into nutrient-rich compost that feeds your soil and helps your plants flourish. We'll cover the basics of composting, the do's and don'ts of building a balanced compost pile, and easy techniques for getting started—whether you have a backyard, a balcony, or just a small space.

Pollinator Power: A Pollinator Habitat Pilot in Baltimore City

Room C201

Sarah D'Adamo (Baltimore Green Space), Alex Smith, Diane Knighton, and Brigit Burbank

In 2024, local environmental land trust Baltimore Green Space implemented a pilot project funded by National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to install and monitor pollinator habitat gardens in 12 of the city's gardens, farms and parklets, the first of its kind funded for an urban setting. This workshop explores the partnerships staged across a local nursery, landscaper, land trust coordinator and garden steward to enact this project and lessons learned about labor, education, and relationships needed to sustain and expand urban pollinator habitat gardening and to enhance land use toward biodiversity and climate resilience.

Adapting a Nationwide Garden-To-Table Program for Native American Communities

Room 6496

Gary Oppenheimer (AmpleHarvest.org)

AmpleHarvest.org's nationwide program for gardeners recognized the unique needs of Tribal communities, which garden more per capita than any other segment of America. By working closely with Tribal leaders and understanding cultural nuances, AmpleHarvest.org adapted its model to implement technology that respects traditional values while enhancing food security. This collaborative effort empowers gardeners on reservations to donate surplus produce, strengthening local food systems, reducing food waste, and maintaining cultural integrity and sustainability.

Cross-Cultural Collaboration for Garden-Based Health and Well-Being

Room 5417

Deidre Schuetz (Nutrition Garden Rx), Kenneth Powell-Wilson

This session offers insights into the richness, dynamics, complications, and opportunities for vibrant cross-cultural collaborations, including what's worked well (and not) with garden-based wellness and programs at Nutrition Garden Rx. We'll discuss ways to enhance the social, economic, and environmental benefits of gardens and related programs.

Breathing in Rhythm with the Earth: Nourishing Ourselves and the Earth amidst Climate Grief

Room 5382

Mallory Craig and Jude Hobdy (The Horticultural Society of New York)

With bombardment of bouts of climate devastation and personal loss, how can we sit with the nuances of climate grief? With the help of our plant kin, we can better support ourselves, our loved ones, and even return to being stewards of the Earth amidst personal and climate grief. This workshop will guide participants in circle-keeping and plant-medicine making to support collective grief within their respective community gardens. Participants will come away with resources for artmaking, medicine-making, and therapeutic gardening activities they can use for events or programs.

Soundbath Mindfulness Meditation for All

Room 8203

Mattia "Tia" Colon (Soundbath Mindfulness Meditation Facilitator, Community Gardener and Master Composter)

Experience a soundbath mindfulness meditation workshop where participants will enter a sacred space to be immersed in the soothing sounds of meditation instruments. The goal is to open up the mind and chakras to deeper wider spaces of peace and healing to promote well being for all. We will reconnect with our bodies so we can reconnect to the earth and its implicit power to heal and strengthen us. After the meditation session, the group will discuss ways to honor their authentic ties to the land, incorporate mindfulness and medicinal herbs into their daily lives and their community gardens.

Saturday Session 3 (Con't)

2:30 P.M.–3:45 P.M.



Soft Life in Practice: Yin Herbs and Rituals for Fiery Times

Room 9205

Simone Davis (Nommo Apothecary)

What does it mean to embrace a “Soft Life” in terms of herbal remedies and ritual? Together we will explore Yin nourishing herbs and practices to support us through fiery times and the warmer season ahead. We will cover ways to soothe from the inside out for support through overwhelm and stress. This includes cooling, hydrating herbs and foods for optimal function of our nervous system, promoting internal moistening, and drawing attention to the importance of slowness in a fast paced world. We will craft an herbal bath which in practice allows space for stillness and softening.

Connection to Nature Through a Cup of Tea

Room C198

Wenting Zhang, Enmy Uribe, and Renee Keitt (Tea Arts & Culture)

Participants will learn and experience a connection with nature through the simple yet profound way of tea sharing. Rooted in mindfulness and sensory awareness, the session explores how tea, as a plant and cultural practice, fosters a sense of harmony between self, nature, and community.

A Wellbeing Index to Measure Community Garden Impact, Carrying Capacity, and Direct Investment

Room 6494

Jody Beck (University of Colorado Denver)

Denver Urban Gardens has put together a proposed Wellbeing Index (WBI) methodology for community gardens based on three pillars: food, community and climate. The metrics within this index come from a combination of readily available third-party data and DUG-generated data. DUG is planning on using the index to qualify and quantify the impact of community gardens in order to be more strategic about how many and where gardens are placed as well as drive investment and support.

Grantwriting 101: A Guide to CitizensNYC Community Leaders Grant

Room 6495

Jose Dobles (Citizens Committee for New York City)

Learn the essentials of grantwriting and how to craft a compelling application for the Community Leaders Grant, provided by CitizensNYC. Learn practical tips, strategies, and insights to help you showcase your project's impact and secure funding to strengthen your community whether you're a first-time applicant or an experienced grantseeker. You'll also discover more about CitizensNYC's mission and the inspiring work of our community gardener grantee partners who are transforming neighborhoods across the city.

Social Media Hacks For Your Garden

Room 5383

Naomi Lacey (Community Gardens Australia)

This workshop will smash some myths around social media, AI, and design to help you get your message out there more widely. Get help to save your precious volunteer time and energy whilst enhancing your social media presence and engagement with a few, super simple, tips and tricks.



Euclid 500 Community Garden

NYC Parks GreenThumb Upcoming Events: Mark Your Calendar!

8th Annual Open Garden NYC

June 14 & 15 | Multiple Community Gardens Citywide

Community gardens across the city will participate in Open Garden NYC by opening their gates to the public and hosting free events and activities on Saturday, June 14 and/or Sunday, June 15

45th Annual GreenThumb Harvest Fair

September 27 | Herbert Von King Park and Hattie Carthan Community Garden, Brooklyn, NY

Join GreenThumb community gardeners in celebrating the start of fall with a fun-filled day of activities for all. As garden season begins, keep our annual GreenThumb Harvest Fair Competition in mind. You can enter vegetables, flowers, fruit, and herbs to this year's competition. Take photos of what you grow earlier in the season, because it's also eligible to be entered into the competition in the fall.

