



Growing Opportunities: **How USDA Can Help Beginning Farmers and Ranchers from the Reentry Community**

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Please use the “Chat” function in the ReadyTalk application to submit questions focused on today’s subject matter.



Growing Opportunities:

How USDA Can Help Beginning Farmers and Ranchers from the Reentry Community

USDA programs can help new farmers and ranchers get access to credit, provide technical assistance and financial support to implement conservation practices, and connect producers with market opportunities. Formerly incarcerated individuals who want to get started in farming can get expert guidance from USDA experts in field offices around the country. This webinar will be an opportunity to learn about USDA programs to help new farmers and hear directly from individuals who have benefited from USDA resources and expertise.

Key Resources:

U.S. Department of Agriculture: <http://www.usda.gov>

USDA for New Farmers: <http://www.usda.gov/newfarmers>

National Reentry Resource Center: <https://csgjusticecenter.org/nrrc>



Webinar Agenda

Introduction

USDA Support for New and Beginning Farmers

USDA Programs and Resources

- Farm Service Agency
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Agricultural Marketing Service
- Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Stories from the Field

- Windy City Harvest
- Detroit Black Food Security Network

Q&A – Please enter questions into the comment field.

Close



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Supporting a **New Generation** of American Agriculture





Easy, **accessible**, modern customer service – save our customers time and effort.

Empower customers.

Embrace **innovation**, support **diversity**.



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Something for everyone - the Big Tent



Veterans

Producers in their **first ten years**

Farms in transition

Farmers and ranchers seeking land

Youth - **the next generation**

Women in Agriculture



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NEW FARMERS ▾

WOMEN IN AG ▾

YOUNG FARMERS ▾

VETERANS ▾

A NEW GENERATION ▾

DISCOVERY TOOL

New Farmers

Discover it here.

Agriculture is full of exciting and rewarding opportunities. Farming is a tough job, but at the heart of it all, you'll see a vibrant community contributing to the future of our nation's health and food security.

Find the resources you need to get started or personalize your search with our [Discovery Tool](#).



www.usda.gov/newfarmers



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Discovery Tool >

Your Personalized Search Tool

Answer a few questions in our Discovery Tool and we'll pull together personalized information we think will be helpful for you.

Get Started



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Come see us today!

USDA has engaged its resources to support a strong next generation of farmers and ranchers by improving access to land and capital; building new markets and market opportunities; extending new conservation opportunities; offering appropriate risk management tools; and increasing our outreach, education, and technical support...

...Including prioritizing \$5.6 billion over the next two years within USDA programs and services that serve new and beginning farmers and ranchers –



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To see our quarterly reports, please visit performance.gov.



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Women in Agriculture

1 million strong



Who are Women in
Ag? >



Resources >



Leadership
Opportunities >



Success Stories >



Get Connected >





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www.USDA.gov/newfarmers





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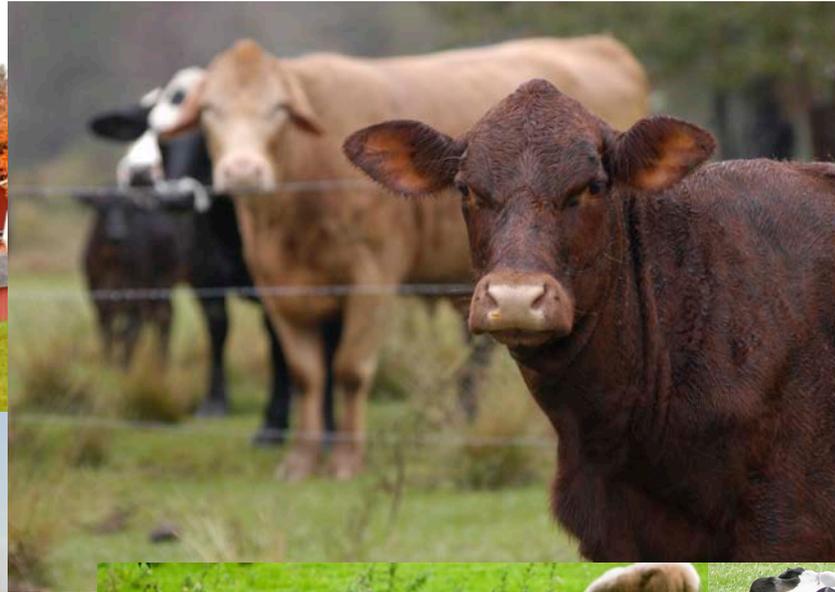


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Farm Service Agency



What is the Farm Service Agency?

- The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is a part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture that administers programs that provide a safety net for farmers and ranchers.
- These programs are administered through 51 state offices and over 2,100 service center offices

Types of Programs

FSA provides farmers and ranchers access to:

- Loans
- Disaster Assistance
- Conservation
- Risk Management

Expanding Opportunities

FSA is dedicated to providing opportunities to:

- Beginning farmers and ranchers
- Underserved (minorities)
- Veterans
- Women

How Does FSA Operate?

- FSA has a large presence in the local community through farmer-elected county committee members.
- County committees help deliver FSA programs by applying their knowledge and judgment to make decisions on the various programs.

Loan Programs

- FSA is a lender of first opportunity and provides credit to agricultural producers who are unable to receive private, commercial credit.
- The loan program is conducted through loan officers that work in the local offices.



Types of Loans

- Farm Operating
- Farm Ownership
- Emergency Farm Loans
- Guaranteed Farm Loans
- Minority & Women Farmers & Ranchers
- Beginning Farmers & Ranchers
- Rural Youth Loans

FSA Microloan



- Overview:

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) developed the Microloan program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and the smallest of family farm operations such as, but not limited to:

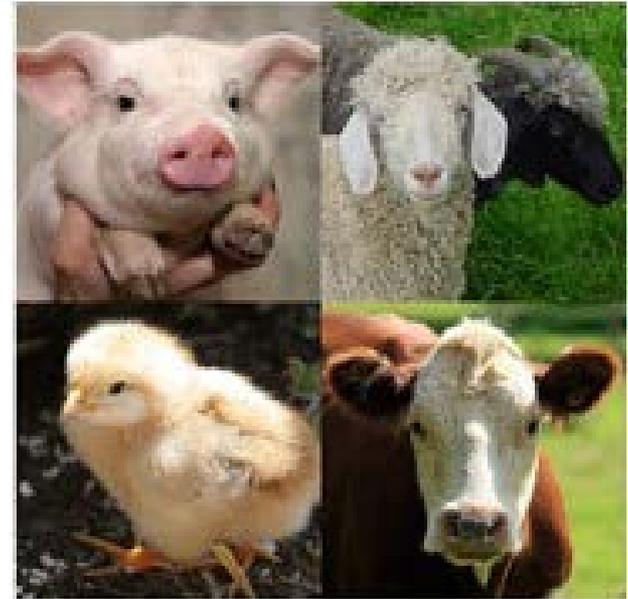
- ✓ Organic production
- ✓ Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs)
- ✓ Small scale livestock
- ✓ Shellfish operations such as clams or oysters
- ✓ Honey cheese producers



Types of Microloans

- Direct Operating Microloan
 - Maximum Loan Amount - \$50,000
 - Loan Terms – 1 to 7 years

- Direct Farm Ownership Microloan
 - Maximum Loan Amount - \$50,000
 - Loan Terms – Up to 25 years



Use of FSA Microloan

Microloans can be used for all approved operating expenses as authorized by the FSA Operating Loan Program, including but not limited to:

- Initial start up expenses
- Annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents
- Marketing and distribution expenses
- Family living expenses
- Purchase of livestock, equipment, and other materials essential to farm operations
- Minor farm improvements such as wells and coolers
- Hoop houses to extend the growing season
- Essential tools
- Irrigation
- Delivery vehicles



Program Feature

- In addition to the loan programs FSA administers various programs. Featured today are:
 - FSFL
 - NAP

FSFL

Farm Storage Facility Loan Program

- Low interest loans
 - On farm production storage needs
 - Build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities
 - Eligible commodities
 - Facilities and upgrades
 - Eligibility requirements
-
- Contact your local FSA office or visit the website at www.fsa.usda.gov.



NAP

Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program

- Plan for the future
 - Natural disaster
 - Buy-up opportunities
 - Waiver of service fees and reduced buy-up premiums available
-
- www.fsa.usda.gov



Getting Started

Contact your local FSA county office and make an appointment.



www.fsa.usda.gov

Information Needed

There is basic information needed during your first office visit?

- Name
- Address
- Phone Number
- Email Address
- SSN/TIN
- Entity Organization Documentation
- Survey Plat or deed for owned land
- Leases for leased land if available
- Information for affiliated owner/operators

Information Needed

Bringing in details of your operation help us identify opportunities for you. Some of these questions are required to sign you up for some of the programs. My farm operation consists of:

- Crops, including pasture and acres that I produce and share in the risk of producing:
 - Crop Name: _____, _____ acres
 - Crop Name: _____, _____ acres
 - Crop Name: _____, _____ acres
- Other: Livestock, poultry, aquaculture, orchards, nursery hogs, viticulture, honeybees, etc.

Ask Questions

Be prepared to ask questions, such as...

Is there a loan program for purchasing seed and fertilizer?

Do I need conservation practices such as livestock watering system, fencing, tree planting?

Should I have insurance on my crops? What type of insurance is available?

Do I need on farm storage for grain, hay or fruits and vegetables?

I have livestock losses due to drought, is there help?

Want to Learn More?

Helpful Websites

- FSA
 - www.fsa.usda.gov
 - www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=fmlp&topic=landing
- USDA New Farmer
 - www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/newfarmers?navid=newfarmers.



Questions?

Linda Cronin
Lead Outreach Program
Manager
Farm Service Agency-Deputy
Administrator for Field
Operations
1400 Independence Ave SW
Stop 0539
Room 3717-S
Washington DC 20250-0539
202-690-1299
Linda.cronin@wdc.usda.gov

Norman Cummins, MBA
Senior Loan Officer
Farm Service Agency-Farm
Loan Programs Loan Making
Division
1400 Independence Ave SW
Stop 0539
Room 3637-S
Washington DC 20250-0539
202-720-3168
Norman.Cummins@wdc.usda.gov



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Natural Resources Conservation Service
(NRCS)

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Michael Whitt
National EQIP Specialist

EQIP Overview

EQIP provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to install conservation practices in order to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, reduced soil erosion and sedimentation or improved or created wildlife habitat.

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/>

EQIP Overview

- Basic Eligibility
 - Agricultural producers and owners of non-industrial private forestland and Tribes are eligible to apply for EQIP. Eligible land includes cropland, rangeland, pastureland, non-industrial private forestland and other farm or ranch lands.
 - Control or own eligible land
 - Comply with adjusted gross income limitation (AGI) provisions
 - Be in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation requirements
 - Develop an NRCS EQIP plan of operations

Assistance to Historically Underserved Producers

Socially disadvantaged, beginning and limited resource farmers, Indian tribes and veterans farmers or ranchers are eligible for an increased payment rate and may receive advance payment of up to 50 percent to purchase materials and services needed to implement conservation practices included in their EQIP contract.

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/people/outreach/slbf/>

Urban Agriculture

- Yes, EQIP can even assist agricultural producers in urban areas!
- The most common practice is a High Tunnel System.



Urban Agriculture

- The NRCS has worked with urban agricultural producers in several cities; such as, Cleveland, OH; Chicago IL, and Detroit, MI
- Benefits include:
 - Provides food in areas that are considered to be food deserts.
 - Community Pride
 - Reduction in Crime
 - Food is often donated to schools or other charities
- <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/financial/eqip/?&cid=stelprdb1046250>

How to Apply

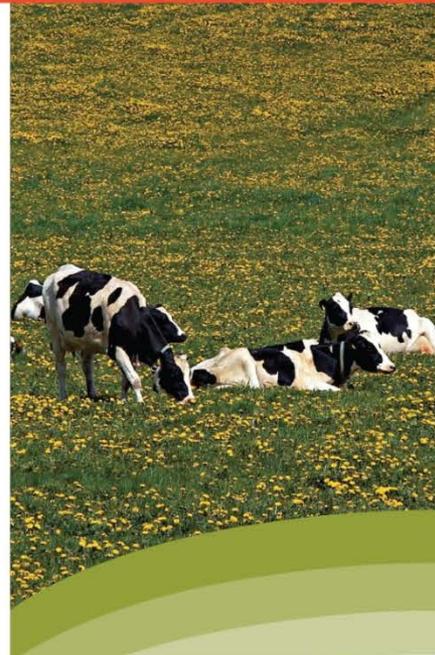
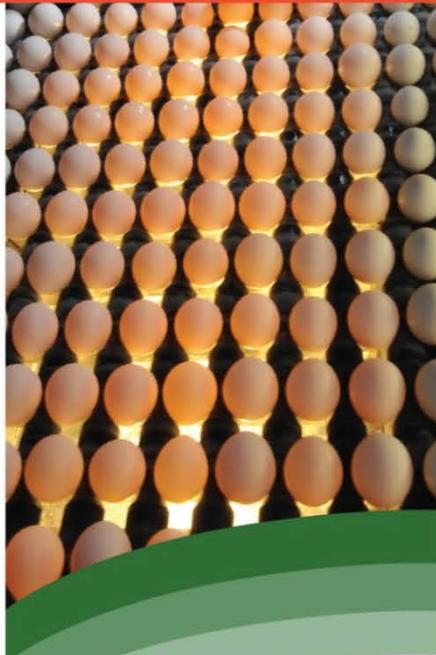
- Visit your local USDA Service Center to apply or visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/getstarted.
- NRCS will help eligible producers develop an EQIP plan of operations, which will become the basis of the EQIP contract.
- EQIP applications will be ranked based on a number of factors, including the environmental benefits and cost effectiveness of the proposal.



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Agricultural Marketing Service

Creating Opportunities for American Farmers and Businesses





Agricultural Marketing Service

Creating Opportunities for American Farmers and Businesses

How Can AMS Help New and Beginning Farmers Access New Markets

*Américo J. Vega-Labiosa, Marketing Specialist
Local Food Research and Development Division
USDA Agricultural Marketing Service*



AMS' Mission

- The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) administers programs that create domestic and international marketing opportunities for U.S. producers of food, fiber, and specialty crops. AMS also provides the agriculture industry with valuable services to ensure the quality and availability of wholesome food for consumers across the country.

Local Food Research & Development (LFRD)

- Market research, case studies, marketing tools
- Facility design technical assistance
- Outreach

AMS Grants and Opportunities

- **Programs for Market Access:**
 - ✓ Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)
 - ✓ Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP)
 - ✓ Specialty Crop Block Grant

- **Food Safety Certification:**
 - ✓ GroupGAP

Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program

Eligible entities include:

Agricultural Businesses	Economic Development Corporations	Producer Associations
Agricultural Cooperatives	Local Governments	Public Benefit Corporations
CSA Networks	Nonprofit Corporations	Regional Farmers Market Authorities
CSA Associations	Producer Networks	Tribal Governments

Farmers Market Promotion Program

- **Program Overview**

- ✓ assist in the development, improvement and expansion of domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agritourism activities, and other **direct producer-to-consumer** market opportunities.

- **Two types of project applications are accepted**

- ✓ Capacity building: development, improvement, and expansion of direct-to-consumer
- ✓ Community Development, Training, and Technical Assistance: outreach, training, and technical assistance

- **Examples:**

- ✓ **Refugee Resource and Research Institute of Indiana, Inc (2009)** – provide with farm tools and other equipment, translation services, promotional supplies and other material to assist with marketing produce at farmers market, restaurants, and supermarkets in the area.
- ✓ **Tohono O’odham Community Action** – start a farm equipment and tool lending program, and organize and implement a series of “fresh sales” where growers and wild harvesters sell their products directly to the public.

Local Food Promotion Program

- **Program Overview**

- ✓ LFPP Planning Grants – used in the planning stages of establishing or expanding a local and regional food business enterprises
- ✓ LFPP Implementation Grants – establish a new local and regional food business enterprise, or to improve or expand an existing local or regional food business enterprise.

- **Previous Awards**

- ✓ **2015 LFPP – \$93,544 to Windy City Harvest Food Hub (Chicago Horticultural Society)** to fund food hub activities such as cold storage, micro-processing space, and aggregation services. Additionally, recipients will offer value-added training to develop new products.
- ✓ **2014 LFPP -- \$100,000 to the Seattle Tilth Association** to support 30 incubator farmers, assess the barriers very small producers face connecting to local markets, and assist an additional 20 King and Pierce County farmers by providing marketing, crop coordination, storage, aggregation and distribution.

Specialty Crop Block Grant

- **Agency/commission/department responsible for agriculture within any of the 50 states, DC, and U.S. territories.**
- **Purpose**
 - ✓ **To solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops (fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops)**
- **Projects can focus on a wide variety of specialty crop initiatives including food safety, education, marketing, and research.**

- Previous Awards
 - ✓ **2012 SCBGP- \$10,000 to Trusted Farms** conducted a research study on the feasibility of creating a fruit and vegetable processing and distribution facility in an existing South Carolina prison

 - ✓ **2010 SCBGP- \$17,300 to Mississippi Office of the Attorney General in conjunction with Oakley Training School** implemented a garden project for juveniles incarcerated at Oakley Training School.

Group GAP

- **What is GroupGAP?**
 - ✓ A robust certification program that addresses the unique challenges smaller producers and food hubs face in complying with food safety audits
- **Why it is important?**
 - ✓ Provides produce safety and prevents health issues
 - ✓ Avoid economic losses
 - ✓ Meets the demands of the retail, food service, and institutional buying community
 - ✓ Provide market access
 - ✓ Aligned with Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)
- **GAP vs. Group GAP**
 - ✓ Share the cost of certification
 - ✓ Operate under a single central quality management
 - ✓ Undergo an audit jointly to obtain GroupGAP certification

Contact Information

Américo J. Vega-Labiosa, Marketing Specialist

Local Food Research and Development Division

Phone: (202) 756-2578

Email: americoj.vega-labiosa@ams.usda.gov

Website:

www.ams.usda.gov/services/local-regional



**Agricultural
Marketing
Service**

Value-Added Producer Grant



Rural Development



Value Added Producer Grant

National Competition Planning

Funds may be used to assist in the development of a feasibility study, business plan, and/or marketing plan related to processing and marketing the value-added product.

Working Capital

Funds may be used to pay for eligible costs associated directly with the processing and/or marketing of the value-added product.

Maximum Award Amounts

\$75,000 Planning

\$250,000 Working Capital

Value Added Producer Grant

4 Eligible Applicant Types

- Independent Producers
- Agricultural Producer Groups
- Farmer or Rancher Cooperatives
- Majority-Controlled Producer-Based Businesses

5 Value-Added Methodologies

- Change in physical state
- Produced in a manner that enhances the value of the agricultural commodity
- Physical segregation
- Farm- or ranch-based renewable energy
- Locally-produced agricultural food product

Value Added Producer Grant

Examples of successful applications...

- Working capital grant funds to diversify a product line of hand-raised, all natural beef products to include a wider variety of value-added raw and ready-to-eat products.
- Working capital to help expand the market for locally-produced, non-GMO, free-range chicken products.
- Planning funds utilized to determine the feasibility of converting switchgrass into fuel and poultry bedding.
- Working capital funds used to process, package, deliver and market premium dessert quality applesauce from organically produced apples.



Value Added Producer Grant Resources

Interested Applicants should begin to become familiar with and utilize these resources in order to submit a successful application:

- **Program regulation 7 CFR 4284 – J**
- **Federal Register Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)**
- **Application toolkit and template available at RD State Offices**
- **Available at VAPG webpage: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/value-added-producer-grants>**
- **USDA RD State Offices @ <http://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/state-offices>**



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Stories from the Field: Windy City Harvest



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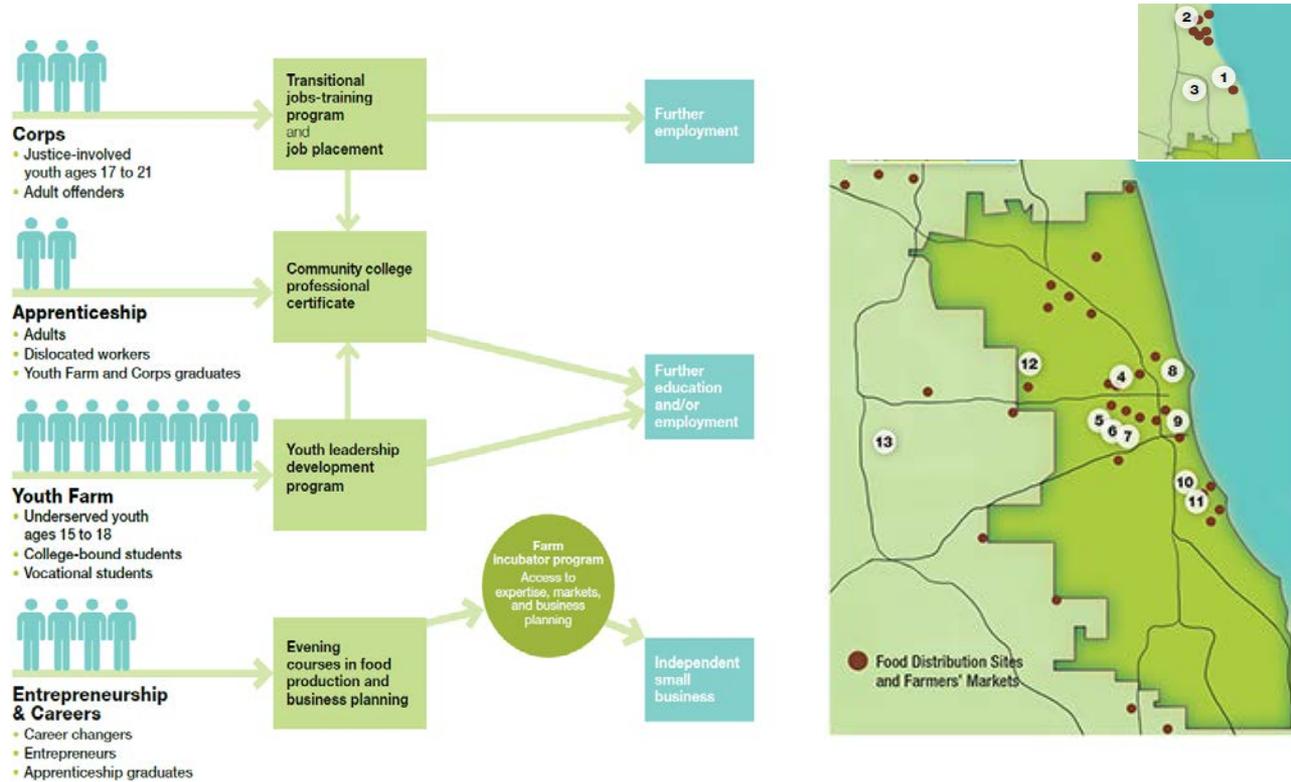
CHICAGO BOTANIC GARDEN

Windy City Harvest

By: Fernando Orozco

Windy City Harvest

Four program components operating at 13 sites in Chicago area





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Paths to Urban Agriculture



Windy City Harvest Apprenticeship



Becoming Staff





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Local Foods and Business Entrepreneurship Course





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McCormick Place Rooftop Coordinator





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Detroit Black Community Food Security Network

Stories from the Field: D-Town Farm

Fostering Community Food Security in Detroit



D-Town Farm is operated by the Detroit Black Community Food Security Network on seven acres in a City of Detroit park.



USDA funding paid for this hoop house, one of three on the farm used for season extension.



Although we are not specifically a reentry program, our staff includes two formerly incarcerated persons.



We grow more than 30 different crops that we sell at a local farmers' market and at the farm on Saturdays and Sundays.



Our national profile recently increased when Sen. Stabenow chose D-Town Farm to announce the Urban Agriculture Act of 2016.



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Contact Us

Detroit Black Community Food Security Network

www.detroitblackfoodsecurity.org

313.345.3663

Further Questions?

Key Resources:

- U.S. Department of Agriculture:
<http://www.usda.gov>
- USDA for New Farmers:
<http://www.usda.gov/newfarmers>
- National Reentry Resource Center:
<https://csgjusticecenter.org/nrrc>