



Fresh Prospects

The Prospect Heights CSA Newsletter

BROOKLYN'S CITY FARMS

Brooklyn is a lot greener than you think. In addition to the small community gardens sprinkled throughout our borough, there are several larger community farms working toward food justice, youth empowerment, and the development of a sustainable urban food system. They run their own farmer's markets, coordinate neighborhood outreach and education programs, and spread the word about healthy, organic produce. Over the next couple of weeks, we'll profile three city farms. This week, read on to learn more about Redhook's Added Value.

ADDED VALUE 305 Van Brunt Street | www.added-value.org

Excerpted from their web site:

Added Value is a non-profit organization promoting the sustainable development of Red Hook by nurturing a new generation of young leaders. We work towards this goal by creating opportunities for the youth of South Brooklyn to expand their knowledge base, develop new skills, and positively engage with their community through the operation of a socially responsible urban farming enterprise.

Since opening our doors Added Value has provided long-term training to more than 85 neighborhood teenagers between the ages of 14 and 19, provided hundreds of local elementary school students with educational programs and worked thousands of volunteers to build a more just and sustainable future for all. Together we have helped revitalize local parks, transformed vacant lands into vibrant Urban Farms, improved our access to healthy, safe, and affordable food, and begun to grow an economy that supports the needs of our community.

Currently, Added Value has four main initiatives:

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT: Intensive summer training periods help new participants develop strong sense of self and community while learning the skills necessary to grow food from seed to sale. During the school year, teens strengthen their core skills while taking over operation of the Farmers' Market and building a strong foundation of knowledge related to the critical issues, such as under employment and obesity, that affect our community.

URBAN AGRICULTURE: Added Value is transforming a once dilapidated playground into vibrant community resource where young and old work, study and grow together as they sow, nurture, and harvest plants on a 2.75 acre urban farm. Operated by our staff, youth leadership team, and a dedicated core of volunteers and interns, the Farm is a vibrant intergenerational space and experiential educational environment for all. Food grown on the Farm is sold at our Farmers' Markets, to local restaurants, and donated to those in need.

FARM TO SCHOOL: During the school year teachers may choose to come for a half-day or day-long service learning project in which they explore the Farm while learning about the social, economic, and environmental issues related to urban agriculture. A school may also choose to develop a long-term relationship with the Farm in which students use exploratory learning to support standards-based educational opportunities.

GROWING A JUST FOOD SYSTEM: Through the Red Hook Farmers' Market and CSA regional farmers and producers can market meats, dairy, vegetables, and value-added products to urban consumers, providing them with access to locally grown, healthy, safe, and affordable food. Profits from the sale of produce are cycled back into the program to support stipends for our youth participants.

Added Value operates two Farmers' Markets: Wednesdays between the last weekend in June and the Saturday before Thanksgiving outside the Red Hook Seniors Center at 6 Wolcott Street; Saturdays at Red Hook Community Farm at 590 Columbia Street.