



Fresh Prospects

The Prospect Heights CSA Newsletter

BROOKLYN'S CITY FARMS

Our profile of our borough's urban farms continues in East New York.

EAST NEW YORK FARMS! AND UNITED COMMUNITY GARDEN CENTER

613 New Lots Avenue | www.eastnewyorkfarms.org | blog at www.eastnewyorkfarms.vox.com

East New York Farms! is a collaborative project whose mission is to organize youth and adult residents to address food issues in our community by promoting local and regional sustainable agriculture and community-based economic development. Together, we grow food for the community, engage youth in hands-on agricultural learning and leadership training, develop economic opportunities for regional farmers, local gardeners, and other small entrepreneurs through a neighborhood farmers' market; preserve community gardens as open space; and educate residents about healthy food and healthy environments.

Their initiatives:

FARMERS' MARKET: Since 1998, this community-run market (including 23 local gardeners, 3 regional farmers, and 11 local vendors) has provided fresh produce and homemade food and crafts to families in East New York. Our market is the only place in NYC to find local and organic produce and Caribbean specialty crops like karela, bora, callaloo, and pure local honey. Local gardeners, craftspeople, and prepared food vendors meet monthly to plan the market and make decisions about the project. Vendors provide over volunteer time toward outreach, event planning, and helping with the farmers' market itself.

YOUTH INTERNSHIP: Each year 20 local teens join us for a hands-on urban agriculture and leadership training program. Youth run their own half-acre farm, The United Community Centers Youth Farm, help other gardeners (many of them seniors) to increase their production, and sell their produce at the weekly market. In the process they strengthen their understanding of science and math concepts, hone their leadership skills, learn how to collaborate with adults to plan and execute a community development project, and discover their own potential to be agents of change in their community.

URBAN AGRICULTURE AND GARDENER ORGANIZING: East New York really does farm. Over 23 urban gardeners in East New York and surrounding neighborhoods grow produce in their backyards or community gardens to sell over 10,500 pounds of produce each year at the weekly market. We provide community and backyard gardeners with agricultural training, help from the youth program, and basic supplies. Training emphasizes environmentally sustainable gardening methods, including composting, rainwater harvesting, water conservation, and organic pest control. We also support gardeners in advocating for preservation of their gardens and educating fellow community members.

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE: The W. Rogowski Farm offers fresh, organic vegetables at reduced prices. Shares are available at even deeper discounts for families and individuals with limited incomes. The United Community Centers Youth Farm also provides some produce to the CSA, such as collard greens and u-pick cherry tomatoes.