Urban Agriculture:
Growing food, values, places, and people

American Society of Nutrition

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Urban Agriculture

- Community/Family Gardens
- Urban Farms
- Cooperatives/Farmers Markets
Urban Agriculture: Creative economic development engine for urban areas

**Urban Assets**
- People
- Land
- Knowledge
- Community
- Creativity
- Waste

**Community/Family Gardens**
- Cooperatives/
  Farmers Markets

**Benefits**
- Reduce food budgets
- Job creation
- Nutrition
- Physical activity
- Green space
- Social connections
- Emotional health
- Healthy physical/
  social environment
Flint, MI
Poverty: 26.4%
Unemployment: 20.3%
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Cities have multiple ASSETS.

Detroit, MI: 30-50% VACANT
Nutrition and Physical Activity

Urban/community gardeners:

- Eat more Fruits and Veggies
- More physically active
- Kids: more likely to try and like vegetables, and eat more of them.


Farmers Market coupon programs: ↑ F&V intake

(McCormack et al, 2010)

GARDENS/ MARKETS = ↑ access to F&V + ↑ social connection = ↑ eating F&V

(New norms and knowledge about eating F&V)
Social Capital and Fear of Crime

Urban/Community Gardeners:

- Know and trust neighbors
- Feel more connected to their neighborhood
- Involved in their community
- Social support
- Know police
- Spend time with neighborhood children
- Reduced fear of crime

(Alaimo et al, 2005; 2010; in prep; Hale et al., Teig et al. 2009; Comstock et al. 2010)
EXAMPLE: Detroit, MI

- $450 M per year SNAP (Food Stamps): 56% is spent at liquor, party stores, and gas station convenience stores
- Shift to local food production = 4,700 jobs & $20 mill in tax base (Shurman, fairfoodnetwork.org)
- Production of 76% of vegetables and 41% of fruit possible on vacant land (Colasanti et al, 2010)

Garden Resource Program Collaborative

- Detroit gardeners: grew ave 235 pounds produce per family

“Grown in Detroit” Program

- 79 gardens
- 2010 sales: $54,000 at 3 weekly farmers markets & restaurants
Urban Agriculture: Multiple benefits, including economic development

Challenges and opportunities

- Zoning and land tenure, recognition of urban ag as viable "redevelopment end use"
- Farming/gardening is labor intensive/volunteers support
- Small farms: Creative financing and infrastructure
- Local urban farmers markets, acceptance of SNAP and market coupons
- Soil fertility and toxicity
- Creative spaces (rooftop)