Homegrown Baltimore: Grow Local, Buy Local, Eat Local

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Establish Baltimore as a leader in sustainable local food systems

BOS Greening Goal #2
Plans to Support Urban Agriculture
Sustainability Plan: Greening

Goal # 2

A. Increase the % of land under cultivation for agricultural purposes
B. Improve the quantity and quality of food available in food outlets
C. Increase demand for locally produced and healthy foods by schools, institutions, supermarkets, and citizens
D. Develop an urban agriculture plan
E. Implement Food Policy Taskforce Recommendations
F. Compile local and regional data on components of food system
Agricultural Plan

Homegrown Baltimore: Grow Local
Baltimore City’s Urban Agriculture Plan

Adopted November 2013 by the Baltimore City Planning Commission
Green Pattern Book

Promoting eight green “patterns” for re-using vacant land:

• Urban Agriculture
• Clean and Green
• Community Managed Open Space
• Green Parking
• Stormwater Management
• Urban Forests
• Neighborhood Parks
• Mixed Greens
Types of Urban Farms
Farming in Baltimore City

Farms

- 17 Urban Farms (For-Profit & Non-Profit)
- 50+ hoop houses in the city

Outlets:

- Farmers Markets, City Supported Agriculture (CSA), Farm Stands, & Restaurants

Farm Alliance of Baltimore City

- 10 Farm Alliance urban farm members
- Abide by Urban Farm Standards
- Completed the Beginning Farmer Training Program
- Accepts SNAP, FMNP, FVC and Double Incentive Dollars
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Grow Local
Urban Agriculture in Zoning Code

Definition:

• The cultivation, processing, and marketing of food, with a primary emphasis on operating as a business enterprise for income generation.

• Urban agriculture includes:
  – animal husbandry, aquaculture, agro-forestry, vineyards and wineries, and horticulture, and might involve the use of intensive production methods, structures for extended growing seasons, on-site sales of produce, and composting.
Soil & Water

Soil Safety Management:

• Under the new Zoning Code, Urban Agriculture sites using existing soils will be required to submit a Soil Safety Plan.

• Farms that gross over $2,500 per year are required by the State to create Nutrient Management Programs

Water Access:

• $120/Year through the Adopt-a-Lot program
Policies to Support Grow Local

- **2015 Urban Agriculture Tax Credit:**
  - Credit gives farmers 90% off of real property tax
  - Land must be farmed at least 5 years
  - Guidelines for credit will be available in January 2016

- **City Owned Land Leasing Initiative:**
  - 3 urban farms have 5 yr leases on 4.5 acres of city-owned land (20 acres available)
  - 5 year leases at cost of $100/year

- **Updated City Building Code – hoop houses**
  - No building permits required for hoop houses
Animal Husbandry

- The “Regulations for Wild, Exotic, and Hybrid Animals” were updated in September 2013
- Allows for Miniature Goats, Bees, Rabbits and Chickens
  - Urban Farms can have up to 50 chickens with management plan
  - 2 bee hives on most properties, scales up with land size, no upper limit
  - 2-24 rabbits on most properties
  - 2-6 dwarf, miniature, and pygmy goats on most properties
Buy and Eat Local
Employee Wellness CSA

- **Policy:** Changed Labor Union MOU to allow for CSA’s to be an approved use for the $250 Wellness Reimbursement
- **Participants:** 100 employees participating
- **Farms:** Real Food Farm and One Straw Farm
- **Logistics:** 7 city drop offs w/ site coordinators receive free CSA share

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEHAVIOR CHANGES</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased Fruit &amp; Vegetable Intake</td>
<td>82%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tried New Fruit &amp; Vegetables</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooked More Meals at Home</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>More likely to Buy Local Produce</td>
<td>80%</td>
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Farmers Markets

- 17 farmers markets in Baltimore City
- 7 markets accept SNAP and double incentive dollars
- 25+ vendors piloted SNAP and Double Incentives through smartphone technology
- Maryland Farmers Market Association
  - Coordinate Maryland Market Money matching incentives
Farm To School: Great Kids Farm

School Food:
• Served +1 million pounds of local produce in SY2015
• Serves Great Kids Farm produce in salads and salad bars

Great Kids Farm:
• 33 acre working farm owned by BCPSS
• Provides education and supplies salad bars
• Learning Journey for every 7th grader
Challenges

• EQIP-funded high tunnels:
  – Can only be placed on existing farmland, which limits new and beginning farmers on land that is partially paved or developed.

• Insurance:
  – Liability insurers are largely unwilling to insure on a small urban scale
  – Small scale crop insurance is often unavailable for urban farmers.

• Aggregation:
  – Need for local food aggregation/hub in the city
Conclusion
Thank You

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