

## **Ideate your dream farm!**

Your dream farm could solve a food system issue or gap at a local level. The local level could mean anywhere from your community/neighborhood to your immediate family.

Identifying the Food System Issue/Gap:

- Define the issue.
- What part of the food system does this impact?
- Where does this occur? Does it affect specific populations? Why does this occur?

Creating your Dream Farm:

- What crop(s) will your dream farm grow?
- Where would your dream farm live? (location/multiple locations)
- Who will your dream farm serve? (people benefitting from it)
- What role does your dream farm play in a food system?
- Identify how will your dream farm be sustainable.

Submit the responses as a Google Doc with the questions above answered in detail. Be sure to include any relevant reference links.

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[Brainstorm/ Quick Notes]

Food insecurity [general issue]

- Lack of fresh fruits & vegetables from food distribution centers etc. [observed]
- Lack of community garden engagement -> using vacant lots around the neighborhood as part of an urban renewal project while designing a closed loop farm system within

- Not many people have backyards or their own outdoor space to grow fresh greens or leafy crops -> the community garden can provide a space or a temporary solution to that/ design an at home manual or kit that can be space efficient (bookshelf size?)
- Working with other non-profit organizations that have a similar mission?

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Food insecurity is a systemic issue that has been on the rise in recent years. It can happen to anyone and it occurs when people don't have access to enough nutritious food to eat and don't know where their next meal will come from. In 2023, the national food insecurity rate was 13.5% and specifically in New York City the food insecurity rates, collected by Census tracts, ranged between 5% and 32%. The main causes of food insecurity that people face: poverty and unemployment, lack of affordable housing, chronic health conditions, and racism and discrimination. Ultimately, this has an effect on one's overall well-being as the consumption of adequate food supply is a necessity for all beings. In 2023, specifically in Woodside, Queens, 9.3% of the population was food insecure. In general, people will have to turn to churches, food pantries or food distribution centers to get their food supply. In these centers, they distribute a variety of foods ranging from grains to packaged meat to canned goods. However, I notice that there is a lack of fresh fruits and vegetables from these distributions. That can result from a variety of factors but I think that there are alternative solutions to this matter through the introduction of community gardens and at-home garden kits.

This is something that I want to change for my community: the introduction of community gardens as well as designing at-home garden kits as part of my dream garden project. As part of an urban renewal project, this dream garden will operate as "nodes" in specific vacant lots to increase community engagement and social interaction. In addition to these nodes there will also be one main hub where most of the activity will take place in this one interconnected system. In this garden, we will grow specific microgreens and leafy crops that are of high nutrition and low maintenance both indoors and outdoors. The take-home kits will be similar to Ikea model systems for easy assembly and disassembly as well as space efficient for different living situations. This dream

garden will primarily serve lower income families or individuals who are food insecure and provide healthy options in addition to the food pantry distributions. And hopefully, one that can provide enough resources that can help alleviate financial struggles while also achieving a close loop system in support of the greater food system.

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1. Lack of community gardens - my idea is to find vacant lots around my neighborhood, Woodside and turn them into small community gardens while introducing and implementing the different food growing methods that we've learned so far such as hydroponics etc.
  - This will be an outdoor project primarily so what will happen to it during the winter would be something to think about too
2. Lack of space - where not everyone has access to a backyard or outdoor space to grow specific crops... maybe designing an easy to use take home system (if that is possible)

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#### Relevance links

- <https://council.nyc.gov/data/emergency-food-in-nyc/#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20NYC%20Mayor's,family%20size%2C%20multiplied%20by%20three.>
  - <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/food-insecurity>
  - <https://www.cityharvest.org/hunger-in-nyc/>
  - [https://robinhood.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/POVERTY\\_TRACKER\\_REPORT18.pdf](https://robinhood.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/POVERTY_TRACKER_REPORT18.pdf)
  - <https://www.nycfoodpolicy.org/the-vital-role-of-nyc-community-gardens-in-enhancing-food-access/>
  - <https://opendata.cityofnewyork.us/>
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