



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 14, 2025

CONTACT

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

MAYOR BRANDON JOHNSON ANNOUNCES THE COMMUNITY GROWERS PROGRAM ROUND 2 GRANT AWARDEES

The Community Growers Program aims to increase the availability of fresh, healthy and affordable food through supporting urban agriculture initiatives in communities with inequitable food access

CHICAGO – Today, Mayor Brandon Johnson and the Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) announced the grantees of the second round of the City’s Community Growers Program. The Community Growers Program, designed in partnership with the City of Chicago Food Equity Council, is a \$2 million investment in urban agriculture with the goal to increase food equity in communities with a history of disinvestment by supporting the development of urban agriculture sites led by local growers. Through the program, BACP and program partner NeighborSpace, are providing urban growers with resources to build long-term urban agricultural sites and technical assistance. This support for urban agriculture in communities with limited food access will provide residents with more options for accessing fresh produce, while also creating wealth-building opportunities for growers.

"I am proud to congratulate this round of grant recipients and commend them for their dedication to uplifting our communities through urban agriculture," said **Mayor Johnson**. "These grants are an investment in our residents' health and wellness and the program moves us closer to a more equitable, vibrant Chicago. My administration is committed to further increasing food access and building wealth across our communities."

"Ensuring food equity and supporting urban growers are vital in creating a healthy, sustainable city," said **BACP Acting Commissioner Ivan Capifali**. "The Community Growers Program provides urban growers, which are small businesses, resources they need to support Chicago's communities with access to fresh food."

Community Growers Program Round 2 Awardees:

- Earl's Garden Mae's Kitchen (EGMK), Greater Grand Crossing

- Eden Place Nature Center/Eden Place Farms, Fuller Park
- Rooted in Transformation, Auburn Gresham
- Sistas in the Village, West Englewood
- Saint James Community Farm, Douglas
- The Generation Garden, Chatham

"The Community Growers Grant Program will allow us to continue our mission of providing healthy, nutrient rich produce for the Englewood community," said **Mecca Bey and Bweza Itaagi, Co-Owners of Sistas In The Village**. "Through food, Sistas In The Village cultivates vibrant communities that center the African Diaspora. The program will allow us to add key pieces of infrastructure for our farm, including secured fencing, solar energy and space to process and store produce on our site. We are excited to continue collaboration with like-minded community partners, and we sell our produce at prices that are accessible for our neighbors, with the majority of the produce staying within the Englewood and West Englewood community areas."

NeighborSpace is a nonprofit urban land trust in Chicago that preserves and sustains gardens on behalf of dedicated community groups. They have supported community gardens – through property ownership, insurance, water, stewardship, education, tool lending, project planning, fundraising support, troubleshooting and more — so that community groups can focus on their community-building visions to generate food, beauty, play, health and safety for their neighborhoods. NeighborSpace is collaborating with the following partner agencies to implement the Community Growers Program: Chicago Food Policy Action Committee (CFPAC), Community Food Navigator, the Conservation Fund, DePaul Steans Center, Grow Greater Englewood, Advocates for Urban Agriculture, Urban Growers Collective, Windy City Harvest and The Conservation Fund.

"The Community Growers Program is a powerful outcome and alignment of historical multi-organizational community food efforts," said **Robin Cline, Assistant Director of NeighborSpace**. "NeighborSpace, along with our community garden and urban farm partners, helped connect Chicago urban growers with land, water and infrastructure support through the program. During this time in history when we need local farmers growing for their community, programs like this one support the very farmers that will support and mentor the future farmers of Chicago."

As the lead delegate agency of the Community Growers Program, NeighborSpace has already supported [18 awardees](#) through Round 1 of the program. This included assisting 11 new urban farms with the land access process and providing critical infrastructure and technical assistance to seven existing farms.

To learn more about the Community Growers Program, please visit Chicago.gov/CommunityGrowers.

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