The Evolution of an Urban Local Food System - Lessons Learned

CULTIVATING URBAN FARMING
GROWING HIGH POINT
FROM THE GROUND UP

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VISION

A city that has dynamic and vibrant neighborhoods that provide access and opportunities to every resident.

MISSION

To transform under-resourced neighborhoods through community engagement, empowerment, and entrepreneurship.

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Organizational Background

- 2014 G'boro-HP MSA # 2 food insecure in nation
- 2015 GHP began as program of Hayden-Harman Fdn
  - Targeted core city
    - Social Justice
    - Food insecurity
    - Housing
- 2019 achieved 501 c 3 status
- 2020 – COVID and original ED departs
- 2021 – Opportunity to assess and adjust
- 2022 – Growth

High Point

- Communities of Concentrated Poverty in Core City
- Core city poverty rate 22 – 51% (HP 15.1%)
  - For children even higher up to 85%
- USDA Designated Food Deserts
- Lack of Affordable Quality Fresh Food
- Post COVID Supply Chain Issues / Inflation

Why Urban Agriculture?

- Improves Food Security
- Provides jobs and business opportunities
- Helps prevent Community Decline
- Helps green cities

GHP – Today

- 11 vacant lots converted ~4 acres
- 3 independent urban farmers ~ 1 acre
- GHP Farms
  - 6 lots 2.9 acres
  - Greenhouse & High Tunnel
  - Apiary
- Farmer In Training Program
- Youth Employment Program
- Food Hub
- Mobile Market / Growdega
- Community Orchard

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Vacant Lot Conversion

Lessons Learned – Urban Farming

Access to Land

- **City of HP**
  - Adopt a Lot
  - Donations
  - Purchased
  - Site selection
- **Soil Quality**
  - Purchased or free?
- **Access to water**
  - Plumbing
  - Utilities

Lessons Learned – Urban Farming

- GHP Farms
  - Mobile Market inventory
  - Farm to Senior boxes
  - Contracts

- Inclusive vs training model

Lessons Learned - Training

FIT – Farmers In Training

- Farm Skills & Principals
- Building a network of farmers
- Hands-on training
- Monthly stipend 1 season
- Eligible to apply for a lot upon successfully completing the program
- Workshops
- Education
- Challenges: transportation

Lessons Learned – Food Hub

GHP Micro Food Hub

- Processing
- Packaging
- Storing
- Aggregation
- Donations
- Classroom

GROWDEGA
GROWING HIGH POINT'S
MOBILE MARKET
FOOD HUB

Lessons Learned - Markets

High Point Farmers Market

- Growdega
- Farmers Market
- Special Events
- Contracts

Lessons Learned – Food Access

Senior Food Box Delivery

18 Families Weekly

- Poverty and poor health are linked
- Low income adults are 5 times more likely to report poor or fair health

Lessons Learned – Food Access

Just Being There is not Enough

- EBT Discounts
- Importance of Marketing
  - Digital Marketing Manager
  - Community Outreach Specialist
- Presentation counts
- Meeting Demand
  - Value-added Products
  - Rented kitchen space
- 2022 First Local Food Fair

Lessons Learned – Building Community

Lessons Learned – Building Community

Lessons Learned - Fostering Urban Ag Entrepreneurs

Youth Employment & Enrichment

- Summer, Holidays, Weekends
- $10 per hour
  - Basic agricultural skills
  - Retail skills
  - Teamwork
  - Workshops
  - Outings & Events
  - Civic Engagement

Lessons Learned Volunteers

Volunteers are Awesome!

- Partnerships
  - Leadership High Point
    - GHP Berry Farm
  - The Friendship Table
    - Growdega et al

GROWDEGA

EST. 2020

GROWING HIGH POINT'S MOBILE MARKET

We Grow Local!

Engaging & Empowering Entreprenuers

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