

RESOLUTION

NO. R-23-244

CITY HALL: May 25, 2023

LDH
BY: COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS

SECONDED BY:

WHEREAS, New Orleans has a rich culinary history that celebrates the bounty of food cultivated, caught and produced in the region; and

WHEREAS, this cultural tradition has its roots in local food production happening in home gardens, community gardens, market farms, in addition to other-types of urban agriculture; and

WHEREAS, food is vital to the New Orleans economy and small-scale farmers are well-positioned to increasingly contribute to this robust economy; and

WHEREAS, purchasing from local producers and local food businesses, in homes, businesses, and large-scale institutions, creates a “multiplier effect”¹, ensuring dollars spent continue to circulate within the local economy; and

WHEREAS, the food system is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, and sustaining regional biodiversity and capacity for food production can enhance food security, economic development, and social stability; and

¹ Shideler, Dave, and Philip Watson. 2019. “Making Change through Local Food Production: Calculating the Economic Impact of Your Local Food Project.” *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development* 8(C):165–77. doi: [10.5304/jafscd.2019.08C.011](https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2019.08C.011).

WHEREAS, urban agriculture is already helping to: 1) manage stormwater as a type of green infrastructure²³, 2) mitigate impacts of urban heat islands⁴, 3) remediate soils⁵⁶, 4) and increase climate adaptation and resiliency within New Orleans⁷; and

WHEREAS, urban households that participate in community gardens are 3.5 times more likely to consume 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day when compared with households not involved in a community garden⁸; and

WHEREAS, in aggregate, research is increasingly conclusive that urban agriculture is important for its multiple and multiplicative benefits to cities, with benefits to local economies, communities, and environments, including those cited above⁹¹⁰; and

WHEREAS, A Greener New Orleans seeks to seize the full potential of urban agriculture and find collaborative and equitable solutions to the issues currently facing New Orleans gardeners and farmers; and

WHEREAS, through robust research the A Greener New Orleans coalition has found 4 major barriers to urban food production locally: (1) land inaccessibility and insecurity, (2)

² Yang, J., and M. Myers. 2007. "Study of Stormwater Runoff Reduction by Greening Vacant Lots in North Philadelphia." Pp. 17–18 in *Proceeding of 2007 Pennsylvania stormwater management symposium* October.

³ IPCC, 2007: *Summary for Policymakers*. In: *Climate Change 2007: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [Solomon, S., D. Qin, M. Manning, Z. Chen, M. Marquis, K.B. Averyt, M. Tignor and H.L. Miller (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press

⁴ Gill, S. E., J. F. Handley, A. R. Ennos, and S. Pauleit. 2007. "Adapting Cities for Climate Change: The Role of the Green Infrastructure." *Built Environment* 33(1):115–33. doi: 10.2148/benv.33.1.115.

⁵ Cunningham, Scott D., William R. Berti, and Jianwei W. Huang. 1995. "Phytoremediation of Contaminated Soils." *Trends in Biotechnology* 13(9):393–97. doi: [10.1016/S0167-7799\(00\)88987-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0167-7799(00)88987-8).

⁶ Angotti, T. 2015. "Urban Agriculture: Long-Term Strategy or Impossible Dream?: Lessons from Prospect Farm in Brooklyn, New York." *Public Health* 129(4):336–41. doi: [10.1016/j.puhe.2014.12.008](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhe.2014.12.008).

⁷ Orsini, Francesco, Giuseppina Pennisi, Nicola Michelin, Alberto Minelli, Giovanni Bazzocchi, Esther Sanyé-Mengual, and Giorgio Gianquinto. 2020. "Features and Functions of Multifunctional Urban Agriculture in the Global North: A Review." *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems* 4.

⁸ Alaimo, Katherine, Elizabeth Packnett, Richard A. Miles, and Daniel J. Kruger. 2008. "Fruit and Vegetable Intake among Urban Community Gardeners." *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* 40(2):94–101. doi: [10.1016/j.jneb.2006.12.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2006.12.003).

⁹ Orsini, Francesco, Giuseppina Pennisi, Nicola Michelin, Alberto Minelli, Giovanni Bazzocchi, Esther Sanyé-Mengual, and Giorgio Gianquinto. 2020. "Features and Functions of Multifunctional Urban Agriculture in the Global North: A Review." *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems* 4.

¹⁰ Lovell, Sarah Taylor. 2010. "Multifunctional Urban Agriculture for Sustainable Land Use Planning in the United States." *Sustainability* 2(8):2499–2522. doi: [10.3390/su2082499](https://doi.org/10.3390/su2082499).

unreliable access to municipal water for agricultural purposes, (3) improper blight citations when participating in regenerative agricultural practices, and (4) a lack of support within city government across agencies and departments; and

WHEREAS, a majority of New Orleans growers access land through private and public leasing which lack accountability, and local growers report often losing access to leased land which is disruptive to creating sustainable community gardens and farm businesses; and

WHEREAS, growers need access to municipal water to maximize productivity and mitigate negative consequences of increasingly frequent droughts; and

WHEREAS, the Sewerage and Water Board New Orleans has standing policies in place for accounts exclusively using irrigation, but regularly does not follow said policies, leaving growers with incorrect bills and crop loss due to water shut-offs; and

WHEREAS, regenerative agricultural practices, such as cover cropping and native plantings which benefit the long-term health and productivity of the land, have a particular aesthetic that may be misunderstood or miscategorized as blight by members of the public as well as city departments; and

WHEREAS, farmers, increasingly engaged in using these practices, are facing incorrect citations and damage, causing crop loss and negative market impacts; and

WHEREAS, having a supported city liaison dedicated to advancing urban agriculture demonstrates a commitment to streamline processes, reduce confusion and increase efficiencies to the benefit of local growers and communities; and

WHEREAS, when gardening and farming are celebrated and fully supported in urban spaces, creating more jobs and businesses, keeping more dollars in the local economy, increasing community green spaces while reducing blight, mitigating flooding and most importantly -

bringing neighbors together and producing fresh and healthy food for our communities; **NOW, THEREFORE**

BE IT RESOLVED, That the City Council of New Orleans declares June as *Eat Local Month* and supports the Eat Local movement, encouraging all residents and businesses to support local farmers, fishers, food producers, farmers markets, restaurants and other food businesses year-round.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City Council of New Orleans supports the A Greener New Orleans urban agriculture campaign and commits to collaboratively finding solutions to the four (4) major barriers mentioned above.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Council will work directly with growers, food system nonprofits, city departments and agencies to devise and implement solutions that will first and foremost benefit growers and, in turn, our city writ large.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Council recognizes the importance of adequately resourcing such work and intends to support efforts to secure all necessary resources to ensure success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Council of the City of New Orleans enthusiastically supports and encourages city departments and policies to actively advance the development of our local food and farm system, recognizing it as not just allowed, but a valuable part of our local economy, culture and community.

THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION WAS READ IN FULL, THE ROLL WAS CALLED ON THE ADOPTION THEREOF, AND RESULTED AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS:

NAYS:

ABSENT:

AND THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.