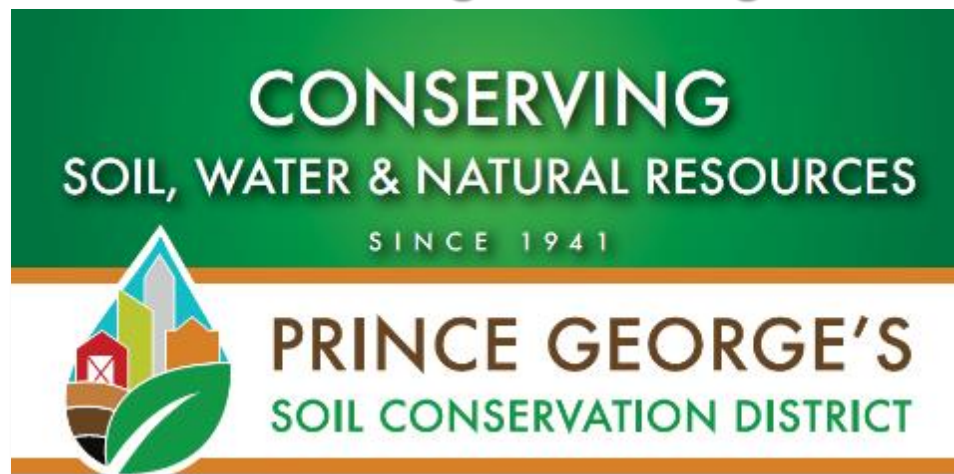




Urban Agricultural Conservation Program

**Improving Health, Education, Environment & Economic Development
for Maryland's Prince Georgians through Urban Agriculture**

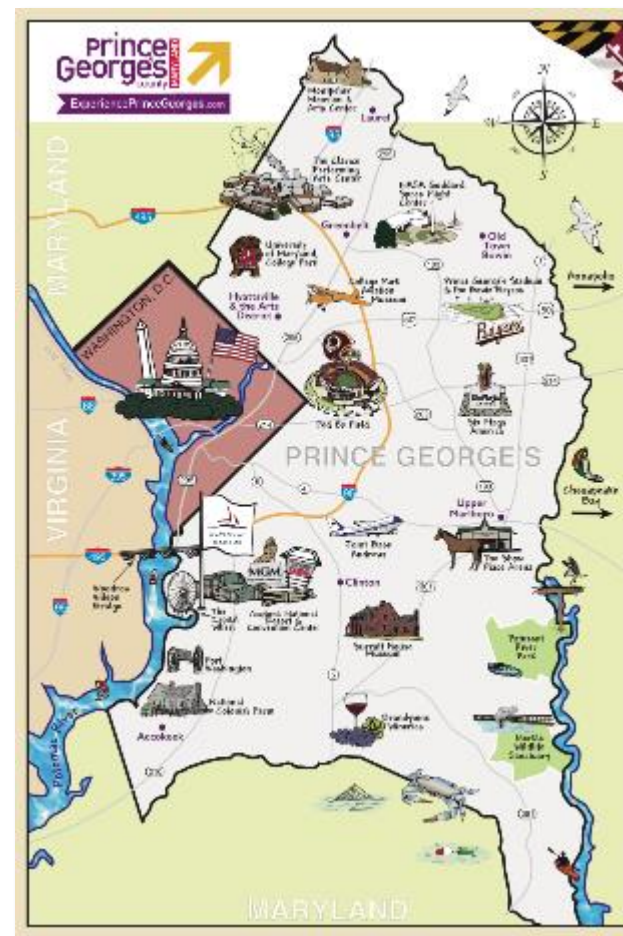


Steven E. Darcey
District Manager

Kim Rush Lynch
Urban Ag
Conservation Planner

County Facts

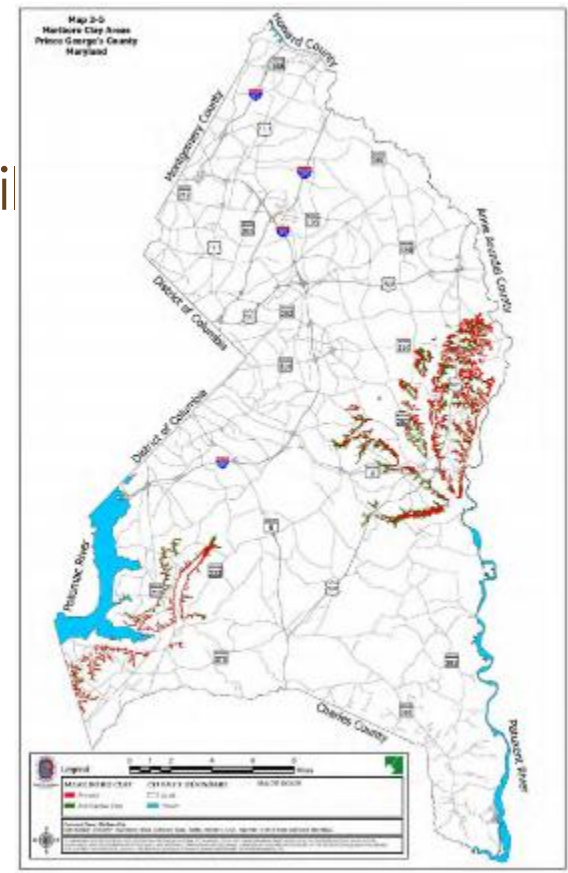
- Prince George's County is ranked as one of the wealthiest jurisdictions in the Nation
- 499 sq mi or 319,000 ac. total land area w/ over 900,000 residents
- 60,000 ac. of agricultural land 72% is privately owned
- 250,528 ac. or 79% of County is zoned for urban farms



Soil Resource Concerns

Soils

- Coastal Plain to Piedmont soils
- Marlboro Clay outcrops
- Acid Sulfate Soil outcrops
- Areas with heavy metals
- >80% of soils are HEL
(Highly Erodible Land)



Water Resource Concerns

Water

- Potomac, Anacostia and Patuxent Rivers are major tributaries to the Chesapeake Bay and all have some level of impairment.
- Impairments include sediments, nutrients, PCBs, fecal coliform, low oxygen/biological activity, and heptachlor epoxide
- Many of the urban ag areas drain directly into tributaries of these impaired rivers



Setting the Stage for Urban Agriculture in Prince George's County, MD



- First MNCPPC community garden in **1980**.
- In **2009** community leaders held town hall forums to discuss **improving lives** in the County by:
 - Improving clean water resources
 - Increasing access to healthier food choices
 - Preserving open space and requiring all new/revitalized development to promote hiker/biker trails
 - Reducing crime, and
 - Increasing opportunities for outside activities that promote healthier lifestyles
- In **2010**, first official PGC urban farm (**ECO City Farms**) founded.

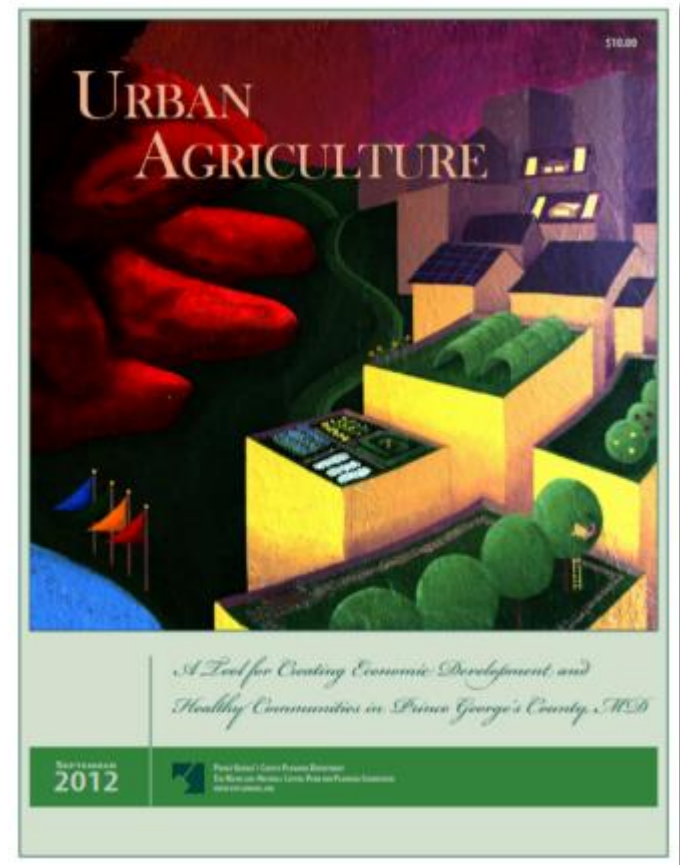
Early Support from the County Planning Department

Maryland National Capital
Park and Planning Commission
published a report in
September 2012 titled:

URBAN AGRICULTURE

**A Tool for Creating Economic
Development and Healthy
Communities in Prince
George's County MD**

– **Gül Guleryuz**



Why Urban Ag?

Improve Health & Quality of Life

- Pre-COVID 19 Outbreak, many communities struggle with food insecurity, chronic disease, and limited opportunities for outdoor recreation.
- **125,000 residents** are food insecure
- Many grocery stores lack high-quality healthy food options
- **55% of all food retail outlets** in Inner Beltway are unhealthy or fast foods
- **12% of residents** participate in SNAP
- **61% of students** receive Free & Reduced Priced Meals

Provide Economic Development Opportunities

- PGC borders Washington D.C. and is 32 miles from Baltimore
- Estimated \$26B is spent on food in the Baltimore-Washington region

only 2% is spent on locally raised food

Urban Ag Policy in Prince George's County



Timeline of Events

1980 - 2009 – Increase in community gardens and interest in urban agriculture

2010 – ECO City Farms established

2012 – MNCPPC releases Urban Ag report

2013 – PGC passes first urban farm definition bill, CB-76-2013

IPHI launches food policy council (Food Equity Council) with stakeholders

2015 – PGC passed property tax credit legislation, CB-74-2015

SCD identified as the **“GO TO”** agency for technical services

2016 – PGC passed zoning legislation to expand urban farming, CB-25-2016

SCD identified as the **“GO TO”** agency for technical services

2017 – Build partnerships and applied for the NACD UAC Capacity Building Grant

2018 – Hired a part-time UAC planner thru the NACD grant

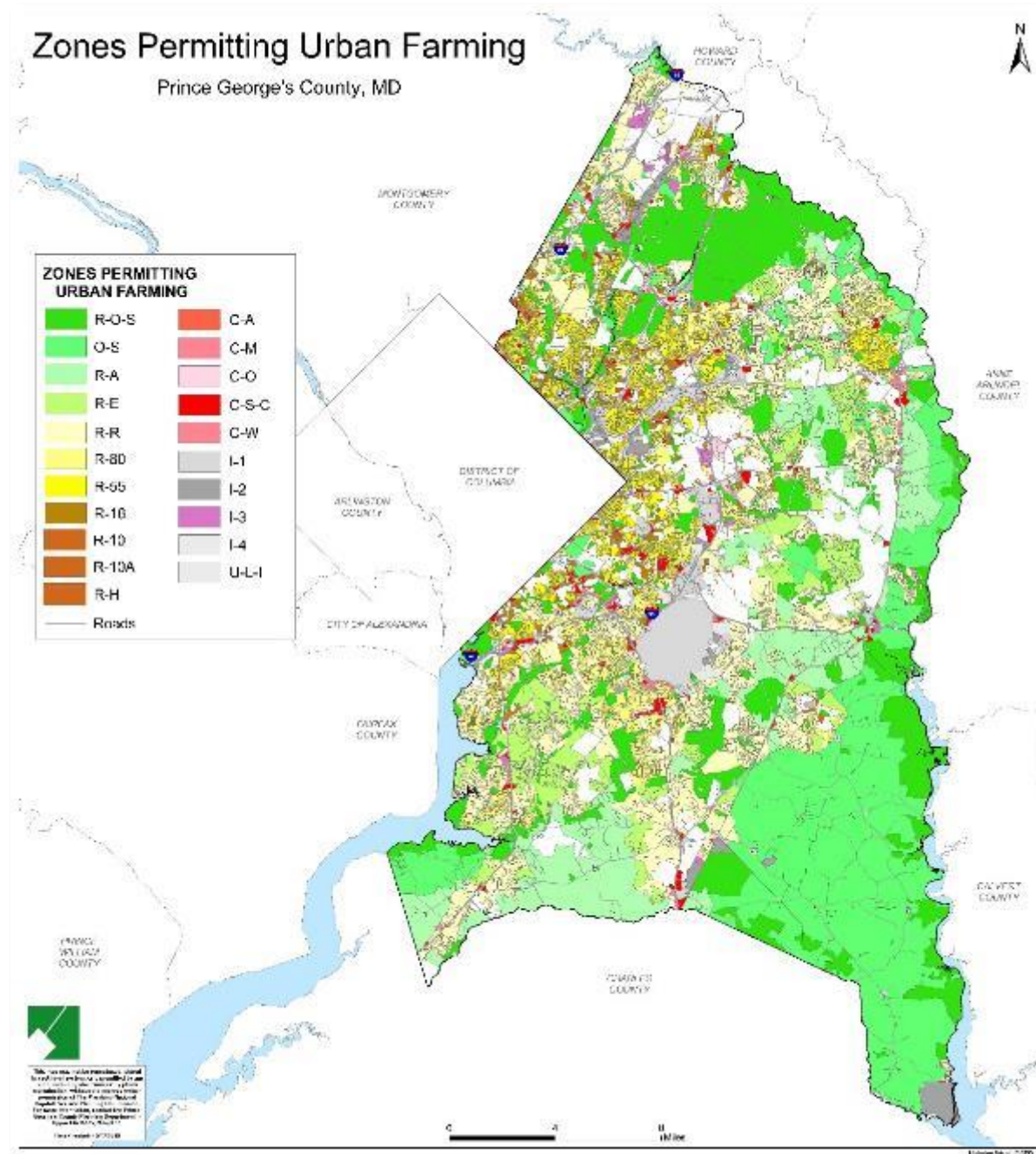
Urban Farm Definition & Zones

- For and non-profits cultivating fruits, vegetables, herbs and cut flowers
- Beekeeping, composting, and agricultural education
- Residential, commercial, and industrial zones
- Uses include rooftop farming and controlled environmental



Zones Permitting Urban Farming

Prince George's County, MD



Urban Ag Property Tax Credit

- Up to \$5,000 per property (\$100,000 cap for the program)
- Gross \$2,500 value
- Property must be 1/8 – 5 acres and located in the Priority Funding Area



NACD Urban Agriculture Conservation Grant



Grant Goals

- Develop Soil Conservation & Water Quality Plans (SCWQPs)
- Implement Best Management Practices
- Provide education and outreach to promote conservation of soil and water resources
- Provide guidance on soils testing (fertility and heavy metals)
- Advise on permitting, zoning and utility location
- Support local property tax credit verification
- Provide training to urban Ag producers
- Assist with USDA-NRCS EQIP applications



National Association of
Conservation Districts



Grant Accomplishments



- Conducted 96 property visits, signed on 12 new urban ag cooperators, developed 12 SCWQPs, processed four USDA EQIP applications for high tunnels
- Assisted producers w property tax credit applications and verification forms
- Developed producer profiles
- Provided support to ECO City Farms and UM Extension for urban farmer training
- Entered into 3 year UAC contribution agreement w NRCS
- Working with County Council, MNCPPC, DPIE and FEC to resolve overlay easement and permit issues
- Conducted soil tests w USDA-NRCS X-ray fluorescence analyzer for heavy metals

Cherry Hill Community Garden, College Park



**M-NCPPC property.
One of the oldest
Community Gardens
in the County. Using
USDA-NRCS XRF Soil
Analyzer**



Grant Accomplishments

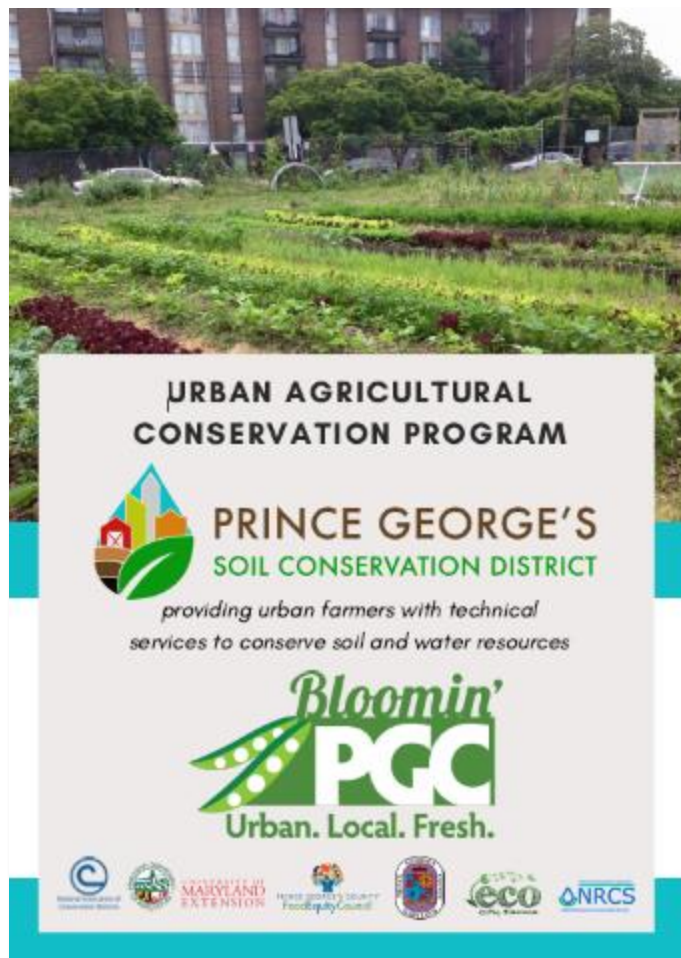
Identified Key Challenges

- Potential soil erosion
- Salt buildup in soils covered w high tunnels
- Location of underground and overhead utilities
- Storm water runoff
- Required building and U&O permits
- Dust control, noise control
- Bees hives and neighbor perception
- Site aesthetics (plastics, hoop houses)
- Lack of irrigation water
- Overlay zoning issues
- Chickens are a major concern
....no roosters...go figure



*UAC program pioneers,
Joseph Haamid & Larry Holmes*

Urban Ag Conservation



Additional Accomplishments

- Supported 37 urban ag producers (current and aspiring) including 16 UAC cooperators
- Engaged 50 stakeholders with technical assistance
- Delivered 65 outreach opportunities through trainings, workshops, presentations, and exhibits
- Partnered with ECO-City farms to develop a soil health badge for their urban Ag course at Prince George's Community College
- Contracted with GeoDecisions to tailor their PracticeKeeper software for the District's



Outreach & Education



Outreach & Education



UAC Program Stakeholders

- Prince George's Food Equity Council
- Metro Washington COG Regional Ag Work Group
- Prince George's Ag Resource Advisory Committee
- Prince George's County Council
- Public School's Environment Agriculture & Natural Resources Program Advisory Committee
- Prince George's County Summer Youth Enrichment Program
- MD-National Capital Parks & Planning Commission

PGC High School Environment Ag & Natural Resources Program

Plant Giveaway

Free Plants & Seeds!!



Available Plants & Seeds

Tomatoes (seedlings & seeds)
Peppers (seedlings)
Herbs (seedlings)
Summer squash (seeds)
Turnips (seeds)



Grow Your Own Garden

During this challenging time the partners below have come together to support families in Prince George's County in growing produce at home.

Please share the joy of growing your own food by engaging your children in starting their seeds and/or seedlings. Below are resources that support student learning.

Resources for Growing Vegetables

<https://www.pgcps.org/learning/learning-resources/growing-vegetables> - Creative guide and resources with links and video tutorials.

<https://www.sustainableliving.org/learning-resources/growing-vegetables> - A resource for no-till, no-spray, sustainable gardening, and integrated pest management solutions for better human and environmental health.

<https://www.washingtonstate.gov/education/learning-resources/growing-vegetables> - An extensive gardening resource by local gardeners for local gardeners.

Making Gardening Fun for Students

<https://www.pgcps.org/learning/learning-resources/growing-vegetables> - Fun activities that provide opportunities for families to garden and craft together.

<https://www.pgcps.org/learning/learning-resources/growing-vegetables> - Student gardening videos, recipes, and tips.

<https://www.pgcps.org/learning/learning-resources/growing-vegetables> - A Garden of Worms! In-joke for parents - a bi-lingual tool for after school garden clubs.

BEGINNING
MAY 13

GRAB 'N GROW

Starting May 13, on **Wednesdays**, Youth & Teens will have the opportunity to Grab and begin Growing Free plants, (while supplies last) from 12noon - 2pm

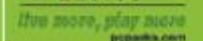
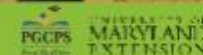
Available at the following sites:

Oakcrest Community Center
Marlow Heights Community Center
Glenarden Community Center

For More Info Call: 301-699-2255 TTY 301-699-2544

For more information, please email Customer Service at customerservice@pgcparks.com or call 301-699-2255 TTY 301-699-2544 for customers who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability. Our front desk staff has access to, on over, the phone interpretation service and can help in over 150 languages.

Please ask for assistance when you call or visit us. The Department of Parks and Recreation encourages and supports the participation of individuals with disabilities. Register at least a minimum of two weeks in advance of the program start date to request and receive a disability accommodation.



@PGParks

@PGParks

@PGParks

Summer Youth Enrichment Program



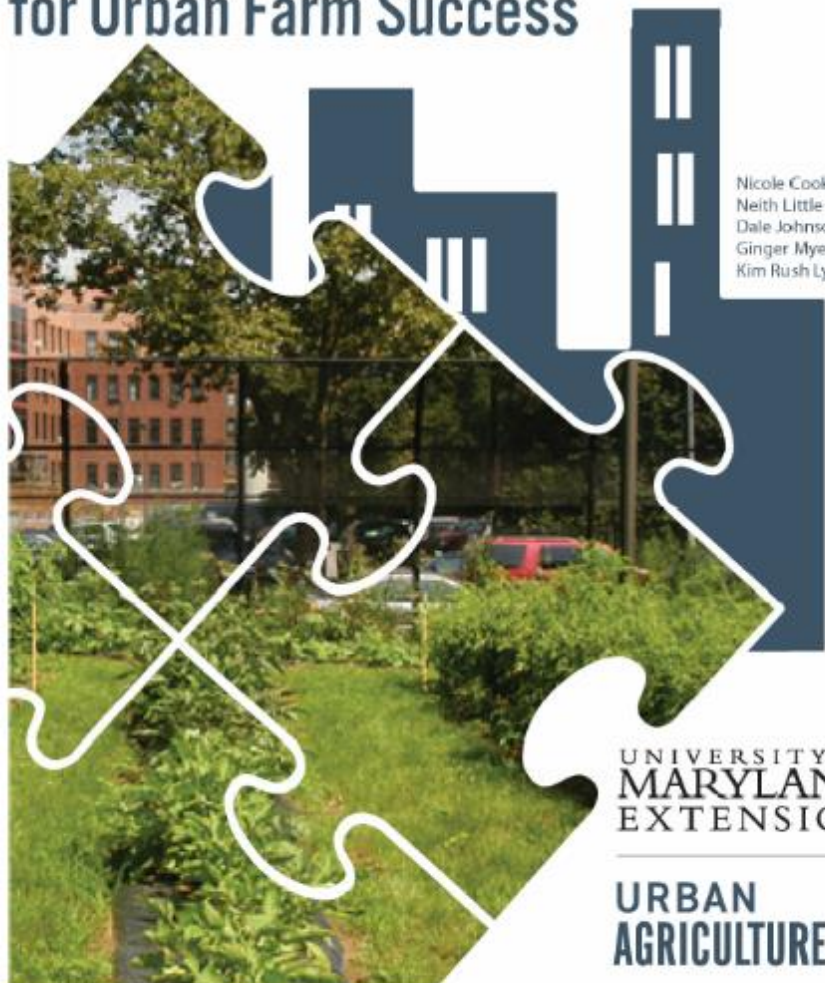
Bloomin' PGC Workshops

2020 Winter Sowing & Seed Swap





From Surviving to Thriving: Risk Management Strategies for Urban Farm Success



Nicole Cook
Neith Little
Dale Johnson
Ginger Myers
Kim Rush Lynch

UNIVERSITY OF
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EXTENSION

URBAN
AGRICULTURE 

Urban Farm Enterprises in Prince George's County



At Home Farm Accokeek



Daniel Troft of At-Home – Farm-LLC raises and delivers fresh produce and eggs to customers and restaurants in Washington D.C and Alexandria VA. Builds raised beds, tables and trellises for sale. Planned BMPs include high tunnel, roof runoff management, nutrient management and micro-irrigation. *Can you ID that plant?*



Bruce Davis Clinton



Bruce Davis is a livestock farmer in Eagle Harbor, a rural community in Prince George's County. He also has an urban farm in Clinton, an urbanized area of the County in the Priority Funding Area. Enjoy Bruce's home-made high tunnel!

ECO City Farms Bladensburg & Edmonston



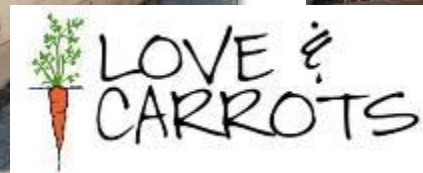
ECO City farms is a non profit with 2 locations providing fresh food through CSA's and training opportunities for urban ag producers.

Elements of Nature Clinton



Linda Jones of Elements of Nature provides all natural hand-crafted natural skin care products, gifts and gift basket using ingredients grown on her urban farm in Clinton, MD. Handcrafted accessories for home and garden.

Love & Carrots Oxon Hill



Love & Carrots creates installations for school gardens, residents, restaurants and other local businesses interested in edible gardens and landscapes. They also provide maintenance programs, coaching, and workshops.



New Brooklyn Farm Mt. Rainier & Hyattsville

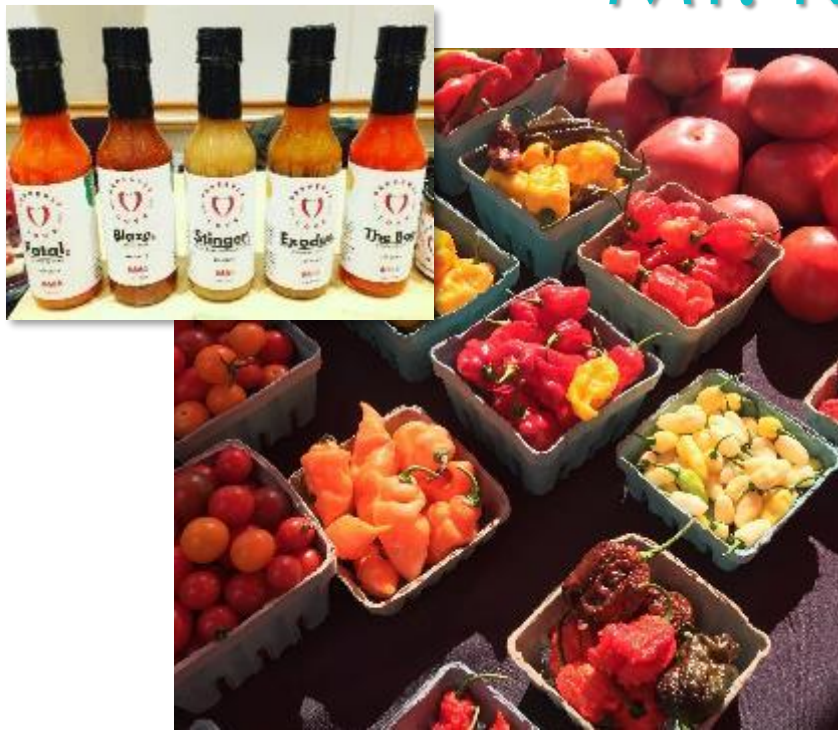


Doug Adams grows lemon thyme for Maryland Meadworks and apples (just planted) for Sangfroid Distilling. He employs a Farmer-in-Residence model as he splits his time between MD and NYC.



NEW
BROOKLYN
FARMS

Pepperly Love & Relish Mt. Ranier



Stephanie Freeman grows HOT peppers for her specialty condiments. She sells at local artisan fairs, farmers markets and on-line. In 2019 she opened a small storefront at Savor at Studio 3807.



Pale Blue Dot Farm Clinton



pale blue  farm

Chris Jones Fleming of Pale Blue Dot Farm sells cut flowers for her seasonal CSAs and raises pastured chickens for eggs for her customers.



On the Horizon

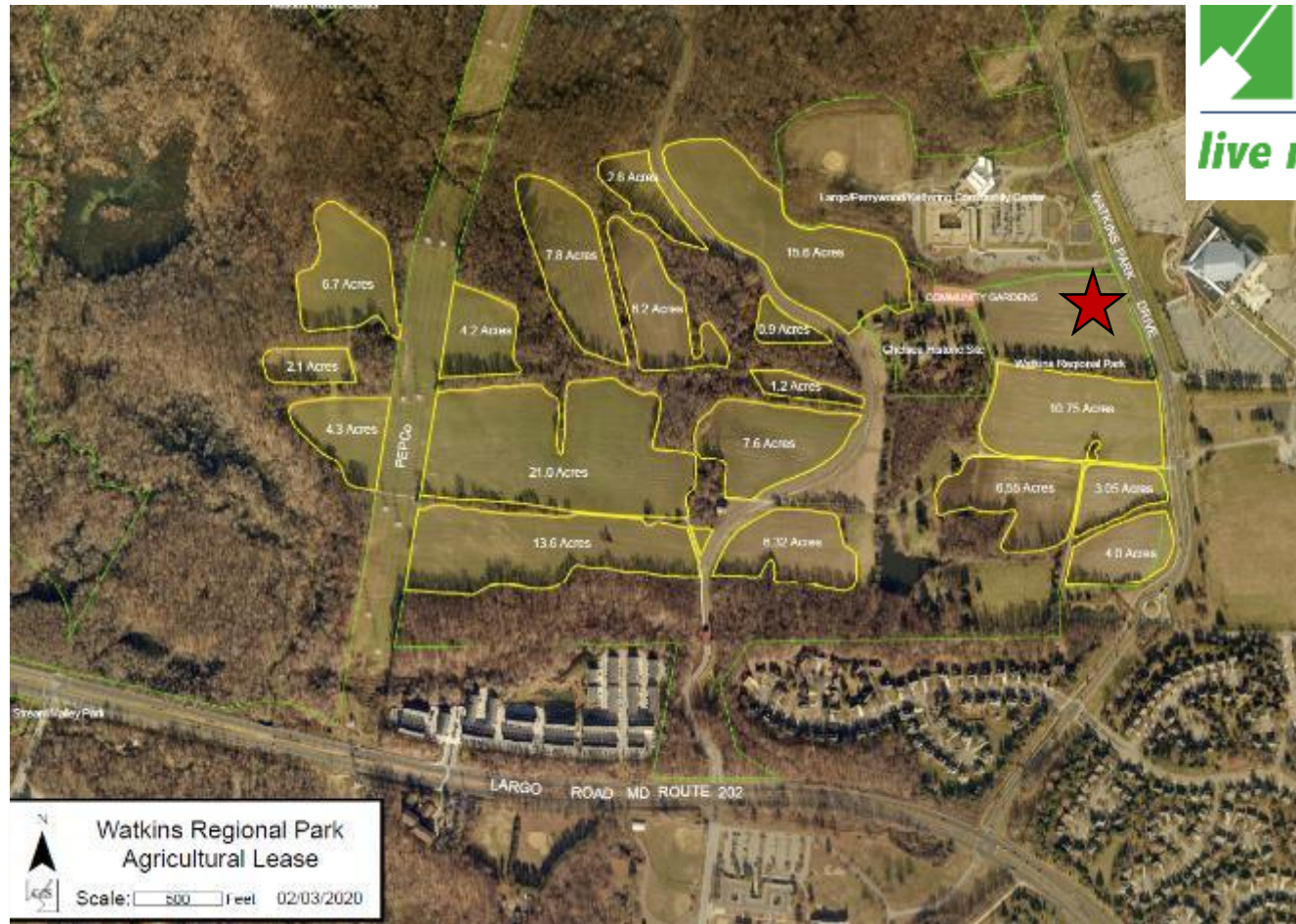


Next Steps: Industry Support

- Develop M-NCPPC urban farm incubator with partners
- Provide guidance to County permitting and inspections on Urban Farm uses and accessory structures
- Work with the Metro Washington Council of Governments Regional Ag Workgroup on initiatives to promote and support urban agriculture industry in the region
- Work with the Food Equity Council and County Council on legislation to allow chickens on urban farms
- Work with the Office of Central Services to identify County land and develop leases for urban farms
- Engage partners and urban farmers to develop

additional resources and policies to support urban farms

Urban Farm Incubator



Urban Farm Ag Leases



live more, play more
pggparks.com

Next Steps: Technical Assistance

- ECO City Farms Beginning Farmer Training Program soil health badge certification for trainees; work with trainees to develop SCWP plan for ECO City Farms
- Begin active “follow-up” program with UAC Cooperators
- Partner with MDA to develop an Conservation Tracker Module
- Develop SCWQPs for MNCCPC community gardens
- Provide support to permitting and inspections office on Ag structure
- Host more Bloomin' PGC workshops





Much Appreciation to Our Partners & Supporters!



National Association of
Conservation Districts



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MARYLAND
EXTENSION



- NACD
- UM Extension
- Food Equity Council
- Prince George's County
- ECO City Farms
- PG Forestry Board
- USDA-NRCS
- MDA
- MNCPPC



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
FoodEquityCouncil



Fresh. Local. Fun.
Prince George's County, Maryland



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
Park and Planning Commission



CONSERVING
SOIL, WATER & NATURAL RESOURCES
SINCE 1941

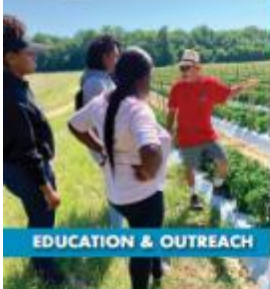


PRINCE GEORGE'S
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

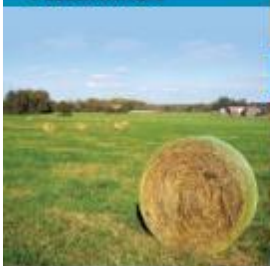
AGRICULTURAL
CONSERVATION



EDUCATION & OUTREACH



AGRICULTURAL LAND
PRESERVATION



URBAN DEVELOPMENT &
CONSERVATION



URBAN AGRICULTURAL
CONSERVATION



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