

## Report to Planning and Environment Committee

**To:** Chair and Members  
Planning & Environment Committee  
**From:** Scott Mathers, MPA, P. Eng  
Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development  
**Subject:** Urban Agriculture Steering Committee  
2021 Annual Report  
**Meeting on:** April 19, 2022

## Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Director of Planning and Development, the following report regarding the status of the implementation of the Urban Agriculture Strategy from the Urban Agriculture Steering Committee **BE RECEIVED** for information.

## Executive Summary

In November 2017 Council adopted the Urban Agriculture Strategy. The Strategy is largely driven by the urban agriculture community, who is represented by the Urban Agriculture Steering Committee, with some City and Agency assistance and guidance. The 2019 Annual Report was received by PEC in March 2020.

This report provides an update on the implementation of the Urban Agriculture Strategy for 2020 and 2021.

## Background

### The Urban Agriculture Strategy

On November 14, 2017 Municipal Council endorsed London's Urban Agriculture Strategy. The strategy was developed over the course of 2016 and 2017 through significant urban agriculture community and City effort. At the November 14, 2017 meeting of council, Council resolved:

*That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner, the following actions be taken with respect to the Urban Agriculture Strategy:*

- a) *the attached revised Urban Agriculture Strategy, consistent with the Food System policies of The London Plan, **BE ADOPTED** in order to guide and support the development of urban agriculture within the City of London as part of London's food system; it being noted that reference to the provision for backyard hens was deleted from the Strategy;*
- b) *the Terms of Reference for an Urban Agriculture Steering Committee appended to the staff report dated November 6, 2017 **BE ENDORSED**; and,*
- c) *the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner **BE DIRECTED** to implement the Urban Agriculture Steering Committee;*

*it being noted that the initiatives in this Strategy that are the responsibility of the City can be accommodated within existing budgets and any new initiatives may be considered in future multi-year budget cycles; and,*

*it being further noted that the Planning and Environment Committee reviewed and received a communication dated November 2, 2017, from M. Woods, Chief Operating Officer, Western Fair District, with respect to this matter.*

The **Goals of the Strategy** are to:

- *Develop a strategy to direct urban agriculture efforts in the City of London;*
- *Address all aspects of urban agriculture within the city and present policy and regulation amendments where necessary;*
- *Determine the roles and responsibilities of the City and community in the implementation of the strategy;*
- *Address gaps that may exist in providing for urban agriculture; and,*
- *Outline criteria for pilot site selection and/or urban agriculture projects*



### **The Urban Agricultural Community Role**

The Urban Agriculture Strategy identified the roles of the City and the Urban Agriculture Community in the implementation of the Strategy. The City's primary role was to support the initiatives and, where required, address municipal policy and regulation roadblocks to implement the strategy.

The Urban Agriculture Steering Committee was tasked with guiding and monitoring the implementation of the City of London's Urban Agriculture Strategy.

The Urban Agriculture Steering Committee was also tasked with providing on-going coordination and direction of City, agency and community efforts. The approach taken establishes a steering committee to provide leadership, monitor implementation and report to Council on progress over the life of the Strategy. The committee is comprised of community members, including representation from Council's advisory committees

which involve agriculture, and maintains connections with the groups in London active in urban agriculture and the Urban Agriculture Strategy's development.

The first meeting of the Urban Agriculture Steering Committee was held March 9, 2018 and there have been fourteen (14) meetings since then. COVID impacts reduced the number of meetings held in 2020 and 2021. The meetings are open to the public to allow for community attendance and input. Committee members are requested to disseminate and share the results of committee meeting with their respective community groups and organizations. Membership on the Committee has changed over the years as members left and new members came, largely due to personal shifting priorities.

The Urban Agriculture Strategy was adopted by Council in November 2017 and this will be the second in a series of Bi-Annual Reports for Council. The report provides an update of what has happened since 2019. Appendix 1 is the report from the Urban Agriculture Community. Appendix 2, attached to this report, provides a detailed update on each of the Strategies Actions with respect to the urban agriculture community progress, City/Agency progress, identified roadblocks to review, progress evaluation measures and the next steps/to do list.

### **The City Role**

The Urban Agriculture Strategy is an urban agriculture community driven process, led by growers, processors and distributors in the industry and those with an interest in urban agriculture. The role of City staff is to:

- Co-ordinate agendas for the Steering Committee and provide technical support for the Committee;
- Attend Steering Committee meetings to answer questions and provide advice as requested; and,
- Review City Policies, Zoning By-laws and processes to support urban agriculture. Changes may include making it easier to sell fresh food to the general public, allow more "pop-up markets", allow urban farms etc. and generally implement the Urban Agriculture action items.

City staff include representatives from Long Range Planning and Research; Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services; Parks and Recreation; and, Solid Waste Management from Environmental and Engineering Services. Building, By-law Enforcement and Zoning also provide information, as well as other City staff, through City Planning to the Committee.

The London and Middlesex District Health Unit also provides a staff resource person to the Committee. One Planning and Development staff member, plus the MLHU staff member from UASC, also sits on the Middlesex-London Food Policy Council to better co-ordinate consideration and discussion of issues related to urban agriculture.

The City of London Strategic Plan for 2019-2023 includes "*to promote and invest in urban agriculture initiatives*". These actions by City staff to support implementation of the Urban Agriculture Strategy are consistent with the Strategic Plan.

### **City Projects Completed in 2020 and 2021**

The Urban Agriculture Strategy identifies a series of actions to implement the strategy and assigns a lead group for each action. Below is a summary of actions where the City was identified as the lead group. Other action items are led by the Urban Agriculture Community, a partnership between the urban agriculture community and the City and those where the City enables the urban agriculture community.

With regard to the City led projects;

1. Completed 2019 Urban Agriculture Strategy Annual Report (PEC-April 27, 2020)
2. Completed City-wide review to change the definition of Household Sales in Zoning By-law Z-1 to allow produce grown on site to be sold as part of a "garage sale" up to 20 times a year. (PEC-July 22, 2020).

3. City Food Security Team formed in April 2021 to co-ordinate various City departments to improve residents access to fresh food.
4. Completed comprehensive review (OZ-9332/Encouraging the Growing of Food in Urban Areas) of London Plan policies, Zoning By-law Z-1 regulations and the site plan review process to allow the growing of food more widely in more areas, on rooftops, in greenhouses and in shipping containers. (PEC-November 22, 2021)
5. City processed private application at 512 McCormick Boulevard to allow food to be grown in multiple shipping containers (Z-9374-PEC- November 1, 2021).

### **City Pending Projects**

The following are projects are to be completed in 2022 and early 2023.

1. In response to changes by the Province as a result of COVID, review of Zoning By-law Z-1 to allow more flexibility in the processing and preparation of food as a home occupation.
2. Review of Parks Definition in Zoning By-law Z-1 to allow a broader range of activities in City parks, including possibly agricultural growing and sales, regulated by the Parks and Recreation By-law (Z-9469/City of London)

## **Urban Agriculture Strategy Implementation Progress and Results**

The Urban Agriculture Steering Committee and the urban agriculture community has reviewed the Strategy and provides the following update on the progress made in 2020-2021 implementing the Strategy on action items they are involved in;

The Urban Agriculture Communities report is contained in Appendix 1.

## **Conclusion**

In November 2017 Council adopted the Urban Agriculture Strategy. The Strategy is largely driven by the urban agriculture community with some City assistance and guidance. Since that time implementation of the Strategy has progressed with Urban Agriculture Steering Committee direction.

This report provides an update on the implementation of the Urban Agriculture Strategy. It includes a status report on the implementation of the action items by the various groups involved in Urban Agriculture.

The Urban Agriculture Steering Committee has provided input for the report and updated Appendix 2 and the Committee members have indicated their concurrence with the staff recommendation.

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**Recommended by:**         **Gregg Barrett, AICP**  
   **Director, City Planning and City Planner**

**Submitted by:**                **Scott Mathers**  
   **Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development**

Note: The opinions contained herein are offered by a person or persons qualified to provide expert opinion. Further detail with respect to qualifications can be obtained from Planning Services

March 24, 2022

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## Appendix 6 – Urban Agriculture Steering Committee Report

### Complete Updates from Each UASC Member for 2020-2021

#### Urban Roots London

##### **1. What was done from 2020-2021**

We worked in collaboration with another organization to set up a tiny farm. Started a small orchard on this site. We grew 16,000lbs of fresh produce in 2021 all donated to community organizations and distributed to people. We hired 11 workers at a living wage for 2021. We expanded the community composting program at Norlan. Norlan expansion of 2 more field blocks to grow more food. We used season extension caterpillar tunnels.

We helped support a community pop up market for several weeks to eliminate barriers to accessing markets. It was held in the Hamilton Road community.

##### **2. What is currently in progress**

More field blocks in rotation at Norlan farm site, looking at erecting high tunnels on site and also getting water and hydro on farm site. At our Siloam site we are planting pollinator habitat native plants along with more fruit bushes/shrubs and trees. We are in talks to hold 4 community pop up fresh food markets in various communities supported by organizations already in those communities as to remove any barriers to accessing affordable healthy veggies.

##### **3. What this group wants to complete in 2022.**

We are looking at site specific invasive species management

Increasing food production and diversifying the fruit on site.

Supporting affordable markets in the community

Community building

Infrastructure at Norlan site

Creating Pollinator habitat

Wetland restoration and enhancement at Norlan site with UTRCA

#### Middlesex London Food Policy Council

##### **1. What was done from 2020-2021**

With a primary mandate of facilitating collaboration and discussion among all sectors of the food system within London and Middlesex County, MLFPC began in 2020 by formalizing its relationship with Western Fair District and The Grove, a collaboration to support The Grove's growth and MLFPC's community connections. Like everyone else, MLFPC's focus changed to building virtual connections once the Covid-19 pandemic hit.

##### **Community Gardens**

MLFPC worked with Sustain Ontario to have community gardens deemed essential services in April 2020, as they initially were not included in the provincial government's list. Gardens were able to open under public health guidelines for the summer of 2020 and 2021, providing much needed sources of fresh food amid concerns about the supply system.

Support for local food producers.

Particularly during the summer of 2020, support for local food producers, suppliers and distributors looked like: sharing information from official and trusted sources (i.e. MLPHU), reducing uncertainty among the community, and building healthy long-term relationships between local food producers and consumers. MLFPC connected with local market operators and agri-food producers to share guidelines and best practices on safety and social distancing and promote the benefits of buying from local producers including farmer's markets, farmgate sales, and U-pick operations. A [local agri-business directory](#) was also developed and shared on MLFPC's website, and a series of radio ads encouraging Londoners to shop locally was created and launched. MLFPC partnered on successful marketing campaigns developed by Middlesex County to promote local food through billboard ads, online campaigns and the Middlesex Culinary Guide.

In fall 2021, MLFPC reintroduced the [Food System Champion Awards](#), engaging the community in the nomination process and recognizing local initiatives, groups and individuals for their work in all sectors of the local food system.

### [London-Middlesex Restaurant Support Fund](#)

Partnered with Pillar Nonprofit Network, McCormick Canada, rTraction and Western Fair District to administer micro-funds for restaurants impacted by closures during COVID-19. A total of \$37,500 was awarded to 38 restaurants. Profiles of the businesses who received funds and the donors were produced by MLFPC student volunteers and shared on social media.

### [Resources for Western Fair District's Agri-Week](#)

Summer 2020: MLFPC and the City of London partnered to develop lesson plan guides for ages 5--18, focusing on what kids can do to lessen food waste at home, including general information and specific activities like a plate waste audit, storage tips and food waste prevention recipes.

Summer 2021: a video showing the path of food waste through the life of a tomato was added to the resources (all are available on the Agri-Week site and on MLFPC's website).

### Information Sharing

- Hosted two online public forums in 2021, with support from London Environmental Network.
- [Finding Room to Grow](#) explored the loss of local farmland, London's urban boundary and the impact of both on local food security issues.
- The second session led participants through the city's Making Urban Agriculture Easy report and collected input for the city on the report's recommendations.
- MLFPC also provided a response to the city's Climate Emergency Action Plan in 2020 and participated in the mayor's task force during the pandemic.
- Chair Jessica Cordes was a presenter in LEN's Green in the City series, and contributed to London Community Foundation's comprehensive 2021 Vital Signs report.

### Advocacy

- In 2020, MLFPC was part of a collective of food policy councils advocating for the adoption of Ontario's Bill 216, *Food Literacy for Students Act*.
- During the pandemic lockdown, MLFPC initiated regular meetings with MPs and MPPS in London and Middlesex County, bringing forward a range of issues on behalf of community partners and fostering open communication with decision-makers.
- MLFPC joined the Ontario Student Nutrition Program as a partner in planning a pilot project in 2021.

## 2. What is currently in progress

MLFPC was contracted by the city of London in 2021 to lead one of the action items recommended in the London Community Recovery Network report: Increasing focus on addressing food security. At this point in the project, a community food assessment (CFA) report is being developed, to update results from an initial CFA completed in 2016 and focused particularly on the impact of the pandemic on accessibility of food.

## 3. What this group wants to complete in 2022.

- The CFA will include public surveys and key stakeholder interviews, with the final report expected in fall 2022.
- Along with the CFA, work on this project will include community consultation and drafting policies around long-term, ongoing food security and food system issues, including a framework for a regional agri-food network.
- MLFPC is also completing an update of its original strategic plan, including the possibility of pursuing non-profit or charitable organization status.

## Friends of Urban Agriculture London (FUAL)

### 1. What was done from 2020-2021

- In January of 2020 FUAL adopted an Operational Structure and Procedures Policy.
- FUAL members created a [map of Fruit and Nut trees](#) in London.
- In February an Executive Committee was voted in consisting of a Committee Chair-person, Secretary-Treasurer or Secretary and Treasurer, Communications Chair, Membership Chair and two Observer positions.
- FUAL Executive Committee began work on a Strategic Plan.
- Supported an Emergency Response Garden Kit project with Greenhouse Academy & Beautiful Edibles
- Promoted the London Public Library's "Growing in the City" program.
- FUAL members hosted and participated in a [January](#) and [March](#) Fruit Tree Pruning



FUAL  
Friends of Urban  
Agriculture London



Workshop.

- Many FUAL members exhibited and attended Seedy Saturday March 7<sup>th</sup> 2020
- FUAL urged members to sign an Open Letter from Sustain Ontario calling on the Province to declare Community Gardens as Essential. Signed on to an OP-Ed report created by Benjamin Hill and the MLFPC
- April 2<sup>nd</sup> FUAL sent a letter to Premier Doug Ford and cc'd all MPPs.
- April 16<sup>th</sup> FUAL sent a letter to the Mayor requesting to be represented on both the Mayor's Economic Impact Recovery Task Force and the Mayor's Social Impact Recovery Task Force.
- No reply was received in regards to either of these requests.
- May 4<sup>th</sup> FUAL sent a letter to the Mayor and Council urging them to adopt the recommendations from the Planning Department for the Sale of Produce at Homegate, implement Urban Food Scaping and increase Funding for more Community Gardens.
- Promoted Local Food Week June 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> 2020
- FUAL members took advantage of the revised Yard Sale Bylaw allowing them to sell home grown produce, curb side, up to 20 times per year.
- September 12, 2020 FUAL assisted with organizing a Food Forest Maintenance workshop

in collaboration with Western Fair District at their Food Forest

- Promoted Ontario Agriculture Week. October 5<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> 2020
- In December FUAL hosted an inspiring presentation from George Akomeah about his work with [Roots Without Borders](#), a non-profit organization focused on sustainable food and sustainable building that operates out of Ontario and Ghana.
- FUAL members hosted and participated in a [January](#) and [March](#) Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop.
- January 28<sup>th</sup> 2021 Jacob Damstra shared an informative discourse about his work with Urban Roots, a non-profit Urban Farm, focused on revitalizing underused land for sustainable Urban Agriculture.
- Partnered with Western Fair District and The Grove to establish The Libro Knowing Growing Garden
- February 25<sup>th</sup> 2021 John Fleming presented the Removing regulatory barriers to growing food plan. Jana Keller, from Beautiful Edibles by Spencer Creek, presented a Seed Saving history of Civilization.
- April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2021 Chuck Parker, Sr. Planner with the City of London presented OZ-9332 - Notice of the Application - Encouraging the Growing of Food in Urban Areas - City Wide
- Promoted Local Food Week June 7<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> 2021
- October 21<sup>st</sup> 2021 Presentation by William Wang & Dan Nejman from Terra Optima
- Jessica Lamckey, joining from Sudbury, working with Uof Guelph, presented an Urban Ag project that has a circular economy perspective looking at Farm Gate Sales and building zone bylaws.
- Members adopted a new Mission Statement and Operational Goals and Objectives.
- Promoted the London Public Library's Green in the City program.
- January 20<sup>th</sup> 2022 Presentation by Gabor Sass of the PATCH Project - Review of the vision, site plans, community partners
- Other Work done by FUAL members:
  - **Beautiful Edibles:** Giant seedling operation and selling veggie plants.
  - Workshops: balcony gardens at Hutton house for youth at risk of food insecurity, consulted periodically with Merrimount Children's centre about rejuvenating their raised bed gardens., harvesting and learning to have fun learning the celebrations toward real good food and knowing one's outdoors. Beautiful Edibles recruited for workshops for seniors and other residents through North East community association. Hutton House food security planning meetings for continuous youth workshops, growing and processing supports. support and planning meetings for building a broader project support network.

## 2. What is currently in progress

- The Patch Project in partnership with Hutton House, Western Fair District & [Nathan's Urban Farm](#)
- On-going monitoring and maintenance of Fruit Trees planted with funding from the 2017 NDM. A majority of the trees have been lost due to the City's grass mowing operations.
- On going maintenance and renovation of an Apple Orchard through the Adopted A Park program.



### **3. What this group wants to complete in 2022.**

- Continue hosting a [January](#) and March Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop.
- Build capacity to better amplify the benefits of Urban Agriculture
- Gain a formal membership commitment from groups that FUAL members belong to.

## **Petersville Community Garden**

### **1. What was done from 2020-2021**

The original plan for the Petersville Community Garden (PCG) was to have a hybrid garden consisting of individual garden plots and a large communal section. We found it challenging to establish a viable communal garden so instead we carved up what was the communal section into individual plots. The garden went from 10 to 22. All the plots were spoken for and it was a successful garden season. However, over the summer a handful of plots were abandoned.

### **2. What is currently in progress**

The majority, 15 out of 22 2020/21 garden plot holders, will be returning this year. We will carve out 2 additional plots from strips of land remaining from the original communal garden. We plan to start signing up new members in February.

### **3. What this group wants to complete in 2022.**

This year we are going to work more closely with the city in order to align PCG's and the city's community garden policies and procedures. In 2024 there are plans for a major water management project in the vicinity of the garden. Since we don't know how this work will impact the garden we are holding off on any permanent garden projects. In the future we hope to set up a composting system to deal with garden waste and we would like to build a shed to store tools etc.

## **Advisory Committee for the Environment**

### **1. What was done from 2020-2021**

2020 began with updates on Farm Gate Sales, a new print of ACE's Pollinator Friendly Gardens flyer for distribution, and an extensive reply to the City's Climate Emergency Action Plan survey. Advisory committees ceased operations between March 2020 and February 2021 given City Covid-19 protocols. In the late spring of 2021, ACE discussed Growing of Food in urban areas by-law amendments, and an ACE member facilitated a session in the City's study (June 2021) entitled 'Making Urban Agriculture Easy', a brainstorm on existing barriers to growing food in local urban areas given policy and regulatory obstacles.

### **2. What is currently in progress**

Council has had an agenda of an advisory committee review through a governance working group for the last couple of years. Recommendations were forwarded in January 2022 to Council after additional consultation with advisory committees' members. Merging ACE and Forestry committees is recommended.

### **3. What this group wants to complete in 2022**

Committee timeframes are under discussion having traditionally been a four year period aligned with Council's term. ACE has been in flux this fall regarding its future format given the City's governance review. In the interim ACE requested updates from both London Hydro and Enbridge Gas to better understand local impacts and utilities' plans for dealing with climate change. ACE originally set the climate emergency declaration in motion with a recommendation approved in 2019. It is hoped a new agenda can be planned early on in 2022.

## **TREA**

### **1. What was done from 2020-2021**

Over 2020 through 2021, new projects - TREA created a number of online tools to support waste reduction and composting with elementary curriculum modules, youth group exercises, surveys and interactive workbooks. As well as a series of take action on climate change how-to videos with community leaders including: How to Compost, Building Raised Beds, Community Gardens, Nurturing your Garden, Building/Managing a Greenhouse, Resiliency Gardening, and

Homesteading Gardening. Lastly, TREA supported a local tool library start-up, now hosted and managed by Reimagine Co. Over 2020, resources came together and in the fall of 2021, a coordinator was hired, who has been developing processes, storage and borrowing protocols, inventorying tools to date, organizing more tools underway, recruiting volunteers, and developing a membership and education strategy.

## **2. What is currently in progress**

TREA online tools and videos are expected to be promoted actively to the public come the spring. TREA continues to oversee its public composting demonstration site. The Reimagine tool library is moving ahead, currently trialing the library in February, for an expected spring 2022 launch.

## **3. What this group wants to complete in 2022.**

Both organizations, TREA and Reimagine, look to share their best practices that support Urban Agriculture.

### **Western Fair**

#### **2020-2021 Urban Ag:**

- Expanded the Wormery (started in 2019), bringing in new kitchen scraps contributors from across London. Over 30 tons of greens collected and processed through the worms.
- Bat houses installed in Queens Park for all the right reasons.
- 2 food forests installed onsite, one in Queens Park focused on Carolinian plant species (Nannyberry, Elderberry, wild strawberry), and one on Ontario St featuring more obscure plants (multi-species pear and apple trees, dwarf blueberry and raspberry bushes).
- started to mix vegetables with annuals in planters-the public are encouraged to help themselves to produce in planters (with mixed results).
- not really Urban Ag focused, but we started pretreating our parking areas with beet juice ahead of snow events with the intention of decreasing our salt usage. More of a conservation story.

- Our community garden at the Agriplex was started with the help of Fisher Topsoil and FUAL, with 17 bushels of produce donated to St Joseph's Hospitality Centre in 2021 (after being picked over by the public at our annual Fair).
- We had beehives before the pandemic (we plan to get more this year), plus 4 pollinator bee houses were installed across our site.
- We added Carolinian zone seeds to our naturalized planting areas across our site from St Williams Nursery. Most of our unused, unpaved areas have been converted to Carolinian planting areas (sloped areas, storage areas, etc).

#### **Urban Ag in Progress:**

- The Wormery is growing steadily with over 30 regular compost contributors and over 60 tons of greens collected annually in addition to our straw used in the composting process. We hope to secure an in-vessel composter from Biovator this year, allowing us to increase our capacity for compost production. The compost is feedstock for our worms, the all-stars that make our beautiful castings. We now have school and adult tours of the Wormery and its processes, hoping to steer more people towards more sustainable organic diversion. We hope to collect close to 80 tons of greens in 2022.
- We've partnered with Growing Chefs and we now have an amazing greenhouse in our Raceway infield. This greenhouse is used to grow healthy food for those who need it, while educating people on the growth and use of fruits and veggies. We (with the help of Ilana from Growing Chefs), will be hosting tours of the greenhouse as the weather improves.
- Just outside the greenhouse but still in the infield we're building The Victory Garden in recognition of 2022-The Year of the Canadian Garden. This garden is an exercise in remediation of soil on an old, overused commercial site. The Fair dates back to 1867 and has hosted everything from rock concerts to army barracks and a plunge of a shovel into the dirt proves it. Together with A & L Labs, Terra Optima, Fisher Topsoil, London Middlesex Master Gardeners and Growing Chefs we plan to test the soil in the area determining a course of action. Then we'll amend the soil over time using organic soil remediation and bioaccumulators and along the way we plan to educate as to the importance of victory gardens to past wars, and how they should fit into our lives in current times.
- We've partnered with Type Dia-beat-it (Mystery Furtado), to convert our Community Garden to a new production garden producing food for the less fortunate. This garden will have a couple unheated hoop-houses to encourage seedlings along, and is already planted with a lot of fruit and berry producing plants.
- Our Knowing and Growing Garden (in partnership with Libro and FUAL), will be producing produce for our own Food and Beverage team which will be included in a video series that will feature cooking with what's at hand, from sunchokes to dandelions and Jesuit pears to elderberries). This garden features urban ag projects such as rainwater collection, 3-bin composting, and usage of waste materials such as pipe planters.

#### **Urban Ag to be completed in 2022:**

- Biovator in-vessel composter (to be used for feedstock production for the Wormery and for educational tours of the Grove)
- The Victory Garden Project (details to follow)
- Knowing and Growing Garden with FUAL
- Type Dia-beat-it Garden and greenhouses
- planting of Carolinian species trees onsite (10-12 trees), to replace older Norway Maples and Mugo Pines
- One last project we'll be helping with is the Cavendish Street Park (Hutton House). We'll be providing planting medium and compost/castings, plus materials and labour as needed to get this amazing project off the ground.

## **London Food Bank**

### **1. What was done from 2020-2021**

In 2020, despite the beginnings of the pandemic, the London Food Bank undertook construction of a greenhouse to add additional capacity to our food-growing operation. Our outdoor gardens, which grew just shy of 2 000 lbs of produce in 2019, were also expanded by constructing 8 more raised beds, giving us a total of 14. The construction of the greenhouse was a major disruption to our regular gardening efforts.

In 2021, thanks to wonderful community partnerships, we were able to distribute around 20 hoopouses to various groups across the city to grow their own food locally to help our neighbours experiencing food insecurity. We initiated our "Adopt a Plot" program to engage community members to take ownership of our raised beds as well as a number of on-ground garden beds to grow food for our clients. We also added two more fruit trees (thanks to ReForest London) to our food forest. 2021 brought us just under 600 lbs from the gardens and 272 lbs from the greenhouse.

We also had an outstanding volunteer step forward to take on composting operations. He is our "compost technician" and has constructed bins for us, and advised on best practices on handling our annual amount of about 40 000 lbs of compost that is directed from our food rescue operations ("Community Harvest" and "Community Refresh").

### **2. What is currently in progress**

We are looking at adding more trees to our food forest. We are also exploring constructing a new garden shed with a green roof. Our compost technician is also constructing more compost bins for us, and we have been generating compost for use in the greenhouse throughout the winter.

### **3. What this group wants to complete in 2022.**

Now that the learning curve and construction disruption from the greenhouse is behind us, we expect 2022 to be an excellent growing year for us in the gardens and in the greenhouse. Our "urban farm" is ever evolving!

We also want to have our cisterns primarily filled by rain water (we currently fill with city water), which will require eavestroughing on our drive shed.

### **1. What was done from 2020-2021**

- UASC had 4 meetings a year (4 in 2020 and 4 in 2021)
- See [Appendix 1 below](#) for full updates from each UASC member organization
- Reviewed minutes from previous meetings
- UASC members are part of various community groups that are working on UA in the city - you can see all the great work they've done in the past 2 years below in the chart.
- Students from the MES program at Western completed the [Guide to Urban Agriculture](#) and uploaded to various UASC member sites - with the goal that the final location will be the City of London site, when the guide has been AODA reviewed.
- Food security became an important issue over COVID-19, and is included in the [LCRN process](#) (3.3) and the [LCF Vital Signs report](#).
- UASC members have been requesting reviews and updating of specific bylaws that were barriers to urban ag production
  - See City report portion of this report for specific bylaws that were requested for review.

### **2. What is currently in progress**

- UASC member groups continuing to work on UA and food security in their various capacities
- Reviewing City bylaws that impact urban ag production

### **3. What UASC wants to complete in 2022.**

- Update Terms of Reference, emphasis on EDI
- Recruit new members for attrition
- Make the meetings public
- Support the Middlesex London Community Food Assessment, run by MLFPC

**Appendix 2 – Urban Agriculture Steering Committee Action Items Working Table (as of February, 2022)**

GROWING					
Urban Farms (in the plan)	Community Updates	City Updates	Identified Roadblocks	Progress Indicator	Next Steps – To-do List
Determine community interest in and capacity for involvement in an urban farm.	<p>Two active Urban farms (Urban Roots) operate locally very successfully. Grew 16,000 lbs of food in 2021</p> <p>Western Fair has interest in urban farming initiatives.</p> <p><a href="#">Cavendish Park is opening an Urban Farm with Hutton House.</a></p>	<p>Changing bylaws to allow for container farms in OEV.</p> <p><a href="#">See various bylaw recommendations here.</a></p>	<p>Various land use policies.</p> <p>Available land.</p> <p>Soil test costs.</p> <p>Capacity of existing groups to expand.</p>	<p>Various farms have been implemented across the city.</p>	<p>Have consistent rules for acquiring land, bylaws for all urban farms to comply with etc.</p> <p>Find more partners and locations for farms across the City.</p>
Develop a vision and model (including management structure), and identify lead partners for the farm project.	<p>Urban Roots operating under nonprofit / social enterprise vision.</p> <p>Western Fair has a vision for an urban farm model on site, within the Grove Strategy.</p>		<p>Various land use policies.</p> <p>Available land.</p> <p>Soil test costs.</p>	<p>Various farms have been implemented across the city.</p>	
Develop a business plan to implement the proposed vision and model.	<p>Urban Roots operating using a 1/3 donation, 1/3 local affordable, 1/3 wholesale model</p>		<p>Various land use policies.</p> <p>Available land.</p> <p>Soil test costs.</p>	<p>Various business plans have been implemented (Urban Roots, Cavendish Park, London Food Bank etc.)</p>	

<p>Determine the most appropriate location and size for an urban farm, and if the City could facilitate access to a suitable area of land.</p>	<p><a href="#">Community map of all Urban Ag locations in London.</a></p> <p>Urban Roots purchased their land at 21 Norlan. Agreement with Siloam Church for land.</p> <p>Cavendish Park will be a urban farm (city owned land)</p>		<p>Long-term land security is an issue for many community farms.</p>		
<p>Evaluate bylaws and zoning rules with respect to their role in enabling urban farms.</p>	<p>The Grove is zoned for growing.</p> <p>21 Norlan Ave zoned for urban ag uses.</p>	<p><b>Various bylaws have been implemented (see list below)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Z-9060 Allowing Farm Gate Sales on Lands Not Zoned Agriculture</li> <li>2. Z-9111 21 Norlan Avenue</li> <li>3. Z-9166 Amend Section 4.11 (Household Sales/Garage Sales)</li> <li>4. OZ-9332 Eliminating Barriers to Growing Food in Urban Areas</li> </ol>			<p>City – continue updating bylaws as needed.</p>
<p>Ensure access to reasonably priced soil tests.</p>		<p>Basic testing available at under \$500 for nutrients</p>			<p>City to clearly offer support for soil tests as needed for community projects.</p>



		\$5,000 range for boreholes and contaminated sites			
<b>Urban “Foodscaping”</b>	<b>Community Updates</b>	<b>City Updates</b>	<b>Identified Roadblocks</b>	<b>Progress Indicator</b>	<b>Next Steps – To-do List</b>
Distribute supportive resources such as topsoil, mulch, compost, and rain barrels to public food-growing projects along with education materials to ensure proper and safe usage of the resources.	TREA, Boys and Girls Club, Food Bank LURC – Compost Day. Gardens groups run Spring Plant Sales, compost sales and 15+ rain barrel fundraising sales in 2021	City sells topsoil/mulch/compost through Try Recycling	Access is on a as requested basis		More community compost days in urban areas for those without cars?
Coordinate seed exchanges through community centres, libraries, etc.	Seedy Saturday continues. Gardening groups offer plant and seed swaps in spring. Native plant sales through local ENGO’s Local nurseries sell items				Confirm status of local seed libraries
Explore ways to encourage institutional involvement in foodscaping of landscapes at places such as churches, hospitals, etc.	Greening Sacred Spaces has launched locally - might be good to approach to gauge interest on UA projects				
Consider education, awareness, and information-exchange events between municipal staff and community volunteers					

regarding foodscaping opportunities in the city.					
Examine existing food forests for potential expansion.	West Lions food forest is planning for expansion				
Ensure good management practices are undertaken to prevent pests and locate edible trees in locations where they can be safely maintained over the long-term.	<p>ReForest London continues to provide fruit trees to the community and offers annual fruit tree workshops.</p> <p>Various community led food forests exist (West Lions, Wood St, Meredith Park).</p> <p>2017 NDM Fruit Tree Planting Project.</p> <p>Friends of Urban Agriculture London members have created a map of <a href="#">Fruit &amp; Nut Trees in London</a> and hosted Fruit Tree Pruning Workshops in 2020</p>	<p><a href="#">Accepts suggestions</a> for trees on city owned land (ex. boulevard) - but only has 1 fruit tree option (serviceberry).</p>	<p>A majority of the community garden trees have been run over by the City's lawn mowers and there has been a small amount of vandalism.</p> <p>There is a cost to maintaining this project.</p>	<p>2018 - 81 Fruit Trees Planted at 9 Community Gardens Pruning and maintenance. 2020-2021 Some fruit was harvested.</p> <p>Community members have added and identified Tree locations.</p>	<p>City to investigate adding to list of acceptable trees that they will plant.</p> <p>Future locations for food forests to be determined</p> <p>Seek replacement of Trees lost to the City's lawnmowers.</p> <p>There is potential to layer another Urban Agriculture map currently hosted by the City.</p>
Evaluate the potential of public land available in the city for public foodscaping.	Kensington Village has many veggie patches on front lawns / boulevards.	City allowing Cavendish Park on municipal land.			City to follow up on City's urban food planting approach
Replace municipal planter box plantings with native fruit/nut/edible species where	Pollinator boxes in place at Civic Gardens.	Some fruit tree plantings as part of			

appropriate and where a maintenance program is in place.	Pollinator flower beds and Covent Market.  Pollinator beds and (2) food forest gardens on WFD grounds/Queens Park.	Dundas East street renewal.			
<b>Urban Pollinators</b>	<b>Community Updates</b>	<b>City Updates</b>	<b>Identified Roadblocks</b>	<b>Progress Indicator</b>	<b>Next Steps – To-do List</b>
Support for urban beekeeping in appropriate locations in the City of London.	London Urban beekeepers establishing first site at Boler Mountain Western University is Bee Canada certified. LOLA Bees started in OEV and has hives at Westminster Ponds ESA. Urban Roots has bees. Beehive onsite at Western Fair District, with education opportunities at the Annual Western Fair		Provincial regulations limit location options.		
Increased pollinator habitat within the City	Pollinator Pathways projects in various neighbourhoods TREA Pollinator Garden at Grosvenor Lodge  Through the Pollinator Pathways Project and London Environmental	Pollinator corridor approach in the works			City to report out pollinator plantings

	<p>Network's Incubator program, 15 pollinator urns were delivered to businesses along Dundas St.</p> <p>Pollinator Gardens installed at Museum London and Western Fair District</p>				
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PROCESSING					
Community Kitchens	Community Updates	City Updates	Identified Roadblocks	Progress Indicator	Next Steps – To-do List
Work with public health to provide food handler training for community kitchen users.	Saturday, July 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2019 at the London Training Centre. Group training offered through Neighbourhood Good	City subsidized 50% of individual costs. \$20 + \$20 = \$40 The test was included that day.	-Cost to user -Having to renew every 5 years -Wait time to write test		Contact with Health Unit for status
Continue to make upgrades to kitchen facilities (in both City and community spaces) to enhance food safety.		City Grants provided – details to follow	Consistent access to Family Centers and Churches		
Investigate health regulations related to food safety in the context of community kitchens and other forms of food processing.	The Ontario government is supporting Home Based Food Business. <a href="https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59861/ontario-supporting-home-based-">https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59861/ontario-supporting-home-based-</a>		<u>4.10 HOME OCCUPATION:</u> ««(Link to London Bylaw) 11) No food preparation or food service shall be		Contact with Health Unit for input.

	<a href="https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/selling_low_risk_food.pdf">food-businesses-during-covid-19 https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/selling_low_risk_food.pdf</a>		permitted as a home occupation.		
Inventory existing inspected facilities that could be used for community kitchens and community garden programs. Make this information available to the public.	MLFPC investigating an approach  The Grove at WFD researching requirements and costs.	Health Unit to provide basis of this inventory	Difficulty gathering facility information for asset map from Recreation Services supervisor staff. Nov 15, 2019 -Mar 5, 2020		MLFPC and City to co-ordinate with MLHU
Facilitate community access to appropriate kitchen spaces.	MLFPC investigating an approach	City Grants provided – details to follow			MLFPC and City to co-ordinate with MLHU
<b>Resource Sharing</b>	<b>Community Updates</b>	<b>City Updates</b>	<b>Identified Roadblocks</b>	<b>Progress Indicator</b>	<b>Next Steps – To-do List</b>
Investigate existing tool libraries and tool- and resource-sharing projects in other cities to see if these models could be used in London.	Tool Library from TREA and Reimagine Co launching 2022		Minimum size of operation expected to be viable  Covid-10 protocols		Reimagine Co is connecting with other communities on best practices
Inventory possible locations and community partners to facilitate a site(s) for sharing of resources.	These are 2 community initiatives to date. TREA received a seed grant. Reimagine Co is hosting and managing it.		Non-City grants available to help incorporate non-profits		Reimagine Co tool library launch is March 2022
Provide grants to support the purchase of key tools for shared use.	Reimagine Co is addressing staff, tool purchases, partners,	City to respond to a proposal for tools			

	and membership at its location				
Mobile Assets	Community Updates	City Updates	Identified Roadblocks	Progress Indicator	Next Steps – To-do List
Investigate the feasibility of mobile cider presses, bake ovens, and other forms of mobile food processing that would also support community events.	Kensington Village has a cider press. NDM application for mobile oven submitted in 2017				- Cindy Bircham contact, has a mobile oven in St Thomas
Consider grants to facilitate the purchase of shared assets in the community.		City already offers various granting opportunities (multi year, innovation, NDM and small events fund)			

DISTRIBUTION					
Farmers Markets	Community Updates	City Updates	Identified Roadblocks	Progress Indicator	Next Steps – To-do List
Work with community members and local farmers to assess the feasibility of starting new markets where there is a demand for new farmers' markets across London.	Western Fair expanding to outdoor space London ICHC looking at a mobile market approach Covent Garden Market staff conducting research on Farmers Market networks  <a href="#">Farmer's Market List created, see here.</a>		SoHo and Southdale markets not a success. Permit costs can deter Farmer require minimum traffic to attend  Certain vendors require business license- City contact: Municipal Policy 519-661-2489 x 7650 eling@london.ca	Western Fair Market researching regulations to qualify for outdoor seasonal farmers market	Need more financial support for farmer's markets in low-income areas

	Urban Roots did a community pop-up market in the Hamilton Rd area in 2021 and are supporting 4 community led markets in neighborhoods along with support from community resource centers in 2022				
Provide support for farmers' markets in public places and community hubs.	Stormstayed had a market in 2019.		Liability insurance for individuals selling product.		
Expand the Middlesex-London Health Unit's Harvest Bucks program for use at more markets across the City.			New organizations need to join in 2020 (investigate model with MLHU)		-New farmers markets, food box programs, fresh food stores contact harvest bucks committee to become a retail recipient of harvest bucks -(Food Fund Inc. potential candidates)
Assess the current zoning and bylaw requirements for markets and the potential for allowing temporary food and other pop-up markets at locations such as community gardens, etc.	Covent indicates that insurance is centralized and assumed by the market organization rather than vendors.				City to examine -Permitting costs -Use of community resources Centres
<b>Local Food Procurement</b>	<b>Community Updates</b>	<b>City Updates</b>	<b>Identified Roadblocks</b>	<b>Progress Indicator</b>	<b>Next Steps – To-do List</b>
Review how other municipalities and institutions have approached	This document was shared with the city in				



local food procurement policy development.	June 2020: <a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/13eluM0GYpumMnp6LKcfBc_DjcmRyFlqa/edit">https://docs.google.com/document/d/13eluM0GYpumMnp6LKcfBc_DjcmRyFlqa/edit</a>				
Partner with other groups and organizations interested in expanding local food procurement in the Middlesex-London region	MLFPC is examining other regional models  Western Fair looking into food procurement opportunities.				
<b>Direct Food Sales</b>	<b>Community Updates</b>	<b>City Updates</b>	<b>Identified Roadblocks</b>	<b>Progress Indicator</b>	<b>Next Steps – To-do List</b>
Investigate bylaw issues related to food sales on private property and community gardens.	Allowed to use entire backyard as a garden and sell at markets - no city bylaw impacts this. If processing the food - the Health Unit.  Community gardens sales have to make a request to Parks & Rec to get permission. Case by case decision.  Community gardens (owned by the city) guidelines indicate no sales allowed.	City updated their farm gate sales bylaws (to allow farm gate sales in Urban Reserves) Completed rezoning for 21 Norlan Ave.	Community garden guidelines don't allow for sales.		City looking at updating Garage Sale bylaw to allow people to sell produce more often through Garage Sales (currently citizens only allowed 2 garage sales a year)
Investigate health and safety regulations related to food sales on private property and	Health unit would need to get involved if food is	Sales are not permitted on Park land.			Adding information to guidelines that are accessible to the

community gardens and methods of education on requirements applicable to direct food sales.	process (ie. made into jam).				public, allowing for increased self-initiated movement in community
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### FOOD LOSS AND RECOVERY

Food Waste Reduction & Recovery	Community Updates	City Updates	Identified Roadblocks	Progress Indicator	Next Steps – To-do List
Investigate the feasibility of instituting a food waste reduction and recovery project with partners such as restaurants and grocery stores, including health and safety issues.	London Food Coalition has established an anti-food waste recovery mode; Foodbank following suit. New Organization: Food Fund Inc Other Inspiration:: Hidden Harvest				
Provide public education promoting the idea of reducing food waste.	Plan for WFD and MLFPC to work together for education at the Annual Western Fair/events.  Videos on food waste jointly produced for online AgriWeek in 2020 and 2021	City will review options to increase further waste diversion through food waste avoidance as part of larger waste diversion strategy	Challenges inherent in bringing about sustained behaviour change		Part of waste diversion strategy being drafted for summer 2018
Community Composting	Community Updates	City Updates	Identified Roadblocks	Progress Indicator	Next Steps – To-do List
Investigate potential linkages between rural compost production and urban users of compost in food-growing projects.			Provincial regulations present challenge		

<p>Promote backyard composting of residential food and garden waste, through an education campaign that includes information about proper</p>	<p>TREA has online tools, videos and demonstration site - facilitates workshops as requested. Over the last 2 years, has visited 3</p>	<p>City will review options to increase further waste diversion through home composting</p>	<p>Obtaining support for program. Effectiveness of program based on progress indicator</p>		<p>UA- part of waste diversion strategy being drafted for summer 2018</p>
<p>composting methods to reduce the potential for pests.</p>	<p>neighbourhoods door-to-door to discuss waste issues and composting. Interest in a larger role in working with residents</p>	<p>programs as part of larger waste diversion strategy</p>			

<p>Provide public education regarding composting.</p>	<p>TREA has developed compost materials and has a school program strategy currently constrained by Covid-19 criteria</p> <p>Over 2020 through 2021, new projects - TREA created a number of online tools to support waste reduction and composting with elementary curriculum modules, youth group exercises, surveys and interactive workbooks. As well as a series of take action on climate change how-to videos with community leaders including: How to Compost, Building Raised Beds, Community Gardens, Nurturing your Garden, Building/Managing a Greenhouse, Resiliency Gardening, and Homesteading Gardening.</p>	<p>City will review options to increase education, subsidies, as part of larger waste diversion strategy</p>	<p>Obtaining support for program.</p>		<p>Part of waste diversion strategy being drafted for summer 2018</p>
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<p>Investigate the potential for community, vermi-, and mid-scale composting.</p>	<p>Western Fair - Wormery Urban Roots - Community Composting</p>	<p>City will review options to increase access to community composting as part of larger waste diversion strategy</p>	<p>Obtaining support for program.</p>		<p>Part of waste diversion strategy being drafted for summer 2018</p>
<p>Investigate the feasibility of composting at restaurants and grocery stores.</p>	<p>Jessica and Matthew Robertson have restarted Village Compost and are available for compost collection. Contact info <a href="mailto:matt@villagecompost.com">matt@villagecompost.com</a></p> <p>Wormery picks up from various restaurants.</p> <p><a href="#">Urban Roots London has a Community compost program.</a></p>	<p>City will review options to increase further waste diversion through food waste avoidance as part of larger waste diversion strategy</p>	<p>Challenges inherent in bringing about sustained behaviour change</p>		<p>Part of waste diversion strategy being drafted for summer 2018</p>

**EDUCATION AND CONNECTION**

<b>Food Hubs</b>	<b>Community Updates</b>	<b>City Updates</b>	<b>Identified Roadblocks</b>	<b>Progress Indicator</b>	<b>Next Steps – To-do List</b>
Identify a leadership group that would manage the development and implementation of multiple food hubs.	London Food Incubator operating. The Grove at Western Fair has launched.		LFI – exclusive to entrepreneurs	The Grove is working through its strategy and working with new partners in development	
Research and prepare a food hub feasibility study and business plan.	Western Fair researching models and determining long-term role for WFA				
Investigate various food hub models and consider which models would work best in London and at what locations.					
<b>School Gardens</b>	<b>Community Updates</b>	<b>City Updates</b>	<b>Identified Roadblocks</b>	<b>Progress Indicator</b>	<b>Next Steps – To-do List</b>
Engage school boards to increase the number and capacity of school gardens.	Erin Mutch contact @ TVDSB - various school gardens exist.		Summer maintenance. Funding		
Understand food systems-related curriculum linkages relevant to elementary and secondary school education.	Summer 2020: MLFPC and the City of London partnered to develop lesson plan guides for ages 5--18, focusing on what kids can do to lessen food waste at home, including general				

	information and specific activities like a plate waste audit, storage tips and food waste prevention recipes.				
Support the development of curriculum connections and teacher training materials related to school gardens.	Growing Chefs teaching programs in schools on cooking skills and the local food system.		Seasonality of Schools  Support from Staff		
Support teachers and schools to bring agriculture into the classroom through connections with farmers.	Western Fair works with AgScape for Fair- would be a good resource: <a href="https://agscape.ca/">https://agscape.ca/</a>				- Andrew Campbell contact; farmer who visits schools and skypes into schools regularly
Create linkages between school boards, the City, community groups, and parent councils in order to promote the goal of a garden in every school.	Sungold Organics Update: Western University and Fanshawe College have both reached out with interest in supporting more local food producers				-Contact Chad Stewart, Kyle Fee (Fanshawe College)
Integrate school gardens with school food and nutrition programs so that food grown in schools is served and eaten in schools.					-TVDSB Contact: Erin Mutch
<b>Community Education and Training</b>	<b>Community Updates</b>	<b>City Updates</b>	<b>Identified Roadblocks</b>	<b>Progress Indicator</b>	<b>Next Steps – To-do List</b>
Develop city-wide community events focused on urban agriculture and food literacy in order to celebrate food	Western Fair District initiatives: - Community teaching and involvement garden		Plans and information currently exist,		Bring industry resources and tools to help WFD develop educational



<p>growing and community gathering around cooking and eating together.</p>	<p>along the Agriplex to display urban farm practises with signage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual Western Fair- looking to enhance education on Urban agriculture within the main agriculture “Barn”</li> <li>- Working with MLFPC to develop new outreach opportunities</li> <li>- Agri-Food Week- events for students to learn about the local food system and food literacy skills. Partner with Growing Chefs and assistance from MLFPC.</li> </ul> <p>MLFPC Hosted two online UA public forums in 2021, with support from London Environmental Network.</p> <p>FUAL promoted Local Food Week (June), Ont Ag Week (Oct)</p>		<p>lack of personnel for support</p> <p>Costs to hold and run events.</p> <p>Need volunteers to educate (10 days)- Fair</p> <p>Agri-Food: High interest with students, but costs of food/supplied/event operations keep growing. Need more chefs/assistance with food prep for Growing Chefs .</p>		<p>display at the Fair in September.</p>
<p>Develop workshop and training materials related to ecologically sustainable urban agriculture that promotes no-till production, biodiversity, heritage seeds, organic methods, and pollinator</p>	<p>Western Fair is doing UA workshops (2021)</p>				

health, among other environmental issues, and their links to urban agriculture.					
Develop educational materials around composting, soil health, sustainable food production, and food processing in various languages, and distribute these materials to the community at large.					