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Latest research, upcoming workshops,
news and events for the Growing Roots community!



Winter flowers at the UC Gill Tract Community Farm. Edith Friedman photo.

Sustainable Urban Farming for Resilience and Food Security

In this issue:

- East Bay Urban Farmer Survey Results
- Partner Profile: Doria Robinson, Urban Tilth
- Workshops, Events and Job Opportunities

Got news? if you're receiving this newsletter, you're doing work we'd like to share with this network. Please send your news, events and job openings to growingroots@berkeley.edu.

Share your story! Partner Profiles introduce you and your farm to a diverse group of community stakeholders. Please let us know if you'd like us to feature your work in an upcoming issue.

East Bay Urban Farmer Survey Results



Summer-Fall 2018



Results from 2018 East Bay Urban Farmer Survey. Credit Alana Siegner.

Farm Survey Results Highlight Urban Farmers' Goals and Challenges

UC Berkeley researchers Jennifer Sowerwine, Charisma Acey and Laney Siegner surveyed 35 East Bay Area urban farms, and presented early results to the community at a gathering at UC Berkeley in December. Farmers described their operations, sharing information on farm financials, land access, production and soil health, distribution methods, waste and compost management, and issues communities face in accessing their produce.

Farms surveyed included both non-profit and for-profit, with annual incomes ranging from \$1000 - \$250,000. Across the board, the biggest challenges for farms in the East Bay are land access and funding. [See more survey findings here.](#)

Farmers also ranked topics they would most like to see covered in workshops, with "how my farm can address racial equity and food insecurity" and "distribution/marketing strategies" most requested. This feedback will help guide our workshop programming over the next year.

Partner Profile: Doria Robinson, Urban Tilth

Greeted by the throbbing beat of rap songs intertwined with recordings of Martin Luther King Jr. speeches, a steady stream of volunteers showed up for the 3rd annual MLK Work Party at Urban Tilth's North Richmond Farm on Monday, January 21.

Volunteers - 156 of them - worked to the beat, shoveling compost, building raised beds, planting seedlings, and setting up a large greenhouse, integrating seamlessly into crews led by various farm staff.

Looking out across the 3-acre farm, a vision of food abundance, diversity, and nutritional value is easy to imagine: **a polycrop of fruit trees, kale plants, herbs, flowers, and annual vegetables thriving in row upon row of homegrown soil.** After a collective moment of silence at noon, the gathered workers paused for lunch served up by Doria Robinson, Urban Tilth's fearless leader.

When Doria Robinson thinks of the **future of food in Richmond**, she thinks of living soil and strong relationships. Her roots in Richmond are deep, perennial and regenerative. She grew up 20 blocks from the current site of the North Richmond Farm, Urban Tilth's largest piece of land. Acutely aware of Richmond's healthy food access challenges, Doria has progressively reclaimed tracts of unwanted, underdeveloped urban land and brought it back to life, growing healthy soil in advance of healthy crops. Urban Tilth has expanded over the past 14 years, and now grows food at multiple sites, including the North Richmond Farm, Adams Crest Farm, and in various planter boxes along the Richmond Greenway.



Greenhouse building at North Richmond Farm. Alana Siegner photo.

Doria and her team are also heavily involved in local and national food policy discussions, from the Richmond Food Policy Council to the Climate Justice Alliance. They now supply over 3% of the city's food demand. Through programs like the **sliding-scale CSA and free farm stands along the Greenway**, Urban Tilth ensures that their city-grown produce is available and accessible to low income households. The CSA currently serves 190 families, and additional subscriptions are available at CSA@urbantilth.org.

Interested in participating in the food sovereignty work of Urban Tilth? Visit their [website](#) to learn about their next Saturday work party.

Spring Workshops, Events and Job Opportunities

Sustainable Urban Farming Project

Are you a farmer who wants to contribute to urban farm success? The Sustainable Urban Farming project team seeks input on food access and distribution from the urban farming and food justice community. To learn more and schedule an interview, contact Laney: asiegner@berkeley.edu.

Community Notices



UC Gill Tract Community Farm Monthly Party: farming, food, and music from 11 am - 3pm on Sunday March 17th. Plant, harvest, weed, prep, compost, and help feed the Bay Area! [More info here.](#)

Paradise Community Garden Open House: Paradise Community Garden in Hayward will have a free Open House (10-4) and Beekeeping Workshop (11 am) on Saturday March 2nd. More info [here.](#)

Urban Adamah is hiring summer camp staff. Details on the Urban Adamah [website.](#)



This newsletter is a project of Growing Roots and the Berkeley Food Institute.
<https://food.berkeley.edu/> <http://growingroots.berkeley.edu>