

Arlington Urban Agriculture – Look How Far We've Come!

Description

At our December 12, 2018, winter meeting, we asked County Board Member John Vihstadt who chaired the County's Urban Agriculture Task Force 5 years ago, and Kim Haun, Urban Agriculture Coordinator, to give us an update on how far we've come since the Urban Agriculture Task Force report issued in 2013.

The County recognizes that we are part of a regional food system, and while they focus on what we can do here in the County, they also coordinate and collaborate with regional partners. A robust and sustainable local food system builds a strong economy and community. A responsible food system supports other values like environmental sustainability, social equity and improved health of the participants.

Community Gardens

There were 276 community garden plots in 2013, and with dividing some larger plots and adding an additional 70, we now have 380, with at least that many still on the wait list. The County splits large plots when the original holder vacates and then assigns to two new plot holders to help address the lengthy waitlists. The County is in the process of automating the waitlist.

There are still 7 community gardens, the County expanded two. Each plot represents at least 3 – 4 people and they feed not only their own families but contribute thousands of pounds of fresh produceto AFAC.

The County built the first ADA compliant community garden plot in the region at the Lang Street Community Garden. This plot features a vertical garden structure, a concrete pad and driveway access, on-street handicapped parking and an in-ground planting border. DPR staff identified and secured a letter of intent with Service Source, Inc., a local non-profit providing services to disabled adults, to maintain the plot. The community gardeners have welcomed them and are including them in communal activities and responsibilities.

Farmers Markets

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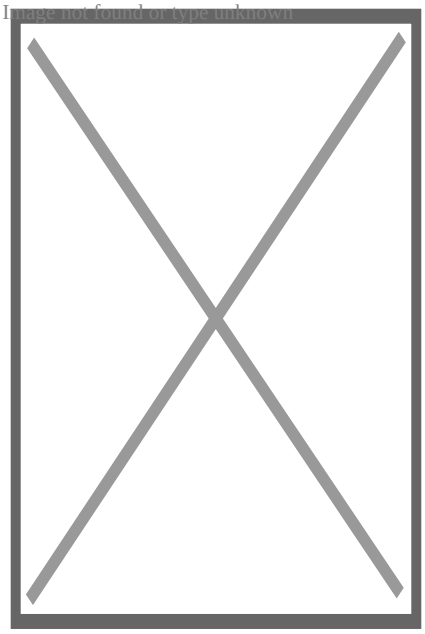

We have 11 neighborhood supported farmers markets, six of them have robust SNAP matching programs. On a single Saturday in one market during the prime season we may get as many as 3000 people attending.

The County Board approved a special use permit for two new farmers markets in 2018. The market at

Category

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Author
robinb