Statement of Solidarity from Arlington Friends of Urban Agriculture

Description

Arlington Friends of Urban Agriculture would like to address the latest events surrounding the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and many other unarmed black people. These events are symptomatic of deep-seeded institutionalized racism that have infested the US for centuries. We stand in solidarity with black, indigenous, and people of color who are routinely and disproportionately impacted every day by social, racial and environmental injustices. To stop racism, we must be anti-racist in not just our words but in our actions. We urge you to have a conversation with friends and loved ones about the realities of systemic racism; make a contribution to an organization working to fight it; and seek out more education about the legacy of race and policing in America.

Friends of Urban Agriculture is working to build a fair, healthy, sustainable food system for all Arlingtonians. To understand and begin to repair the root issues of inequality in our food system requires a deep look at its history and the ways in which it perpetuates racism in our country: from sowing to consumption. The origins of America's agricultural system is rooted in acts of violence and theft against indigenous communities and the enslavement of black people for labor. Our nation's current industrial food system continues to exploit non-white migrant laborers through low wages, non-existent benefits, and challenging working conditions. It is not just how our food is grown; it's also who is able to consume wholesome, healthy foods. The pandemic has shined a light on the shocking number of food insecure in our nation – with the highest rates affecting black, indigenous and people of color. The number of food insecure has only grown exponentially worse and will be with us for a very long time.

Friends of Urban Agriculture, as a newly established nonprofit, will challenge ourselves and our community to actively disrupt the prejudice and racism inculcated in our food system. This is especially true for our local food system which we are committed to making equitable and fair for all participants. We know this work will take time and substantial investment in change and will not be accomplished through one conversation or one workshop. We know that this is an ongoing process that demands challenging unsaid norms and behaviors as we continually address our prejudices – and acknowledge our privileges – in order to fight for the seismic shift we need to see in all areas in our country, including agriculture. We invite you to join us in this challenge, so that we can work together to change inequitable systems, build diverse leadership, push forward conversation, and fight for justice.

Category

1. Press Release

Date Created
June 10, 2020
Author
robinb