



CHICAGO BOTANIC GARDEN

WINDY CITY HARVEST

A Growing Community Enterprise



WHAT IS WINDY CITY HARVEST?

Delivered in partnership with the City Colleges of Chicago, Windy City Harvest is an organic vegetable and plant production enterprise that provides instruction in sustainable horticulture and urban agriculture.

Windy City Harvest creates jobs, opportunity, and hope by training participants to produce high-value, organic produce, which is sold at retail outlets and made available and accessible to local residents.

WHO PARTICIPATES?

Young adults from the city of Chicago.

WHAT DO THE STUDENTS LEARN?

Participants acquire hands-on experience with sustainable vegetable production and learn essential business skills, including planning, pricing, sales, and marketing.

Students receive six months of hands-on instruction in greenhouse and outdoor growing practices, followed by a three-month paid internship. Students can also opt for a five-month certificate in cool-weather growing techniques for hoophouses and greenhouses.

After satisfactory completion of the curriculum and training requirements, students achieve certification in sustainable urban horticulture and urban agriculture. The certificate includes credit hours from the City Colleges of Chicago and readies participants for permanent employment in the new “green collar” jobs sector.

WHERE DOES IT TAKE PLACE?

Windy City Harvest participants study at the City Colleges of Chicago Arturo Velasquez Institute at 28th Street and Western Avenue in Chicago, and other sites. The locations provide state-of-the-art greenhouses, fully equipped classrooms, and high-quality outdoor plant production spaces.

Instructors are certified and trained by Chicago Botanic Garden staff.



WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF WINDY CITY HARVEST?

The growing demand from individuals, commercial establishments, and educational and healthcare institutions for locally grown, affordable produce holds the promise of a bright future for Windy City Harvest and its graduates.

WHERE IS WINDY CITY HARVEST PRODUCE SOLD?

- The Green Grocer on Grand Avenue
- The North Lawndale Farmers' Market
- The Chicago Botanic Garden Farmers' Market
- Willis Tower Farmers' Market
- Bronzeville Farmers' Market

WHO ARE THE GARDEN'S PARTNERS IN THE INITIATIVE?

Support for Windy City Harvest has come from neighborhood, community and civic organizations; educational institutions; governmental agencies; and charitable organizations throughout the Chicago area, the Midwest, and nationally. Leading funders include the Steans Family Foundation, the Searle Funds of the Chicago Community Trust, the USDA, and the Institute for Museum and Library Services.

COOK COUNTY BOOT CAMP

In June 2009, with funding from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, the Chicago Botanic Garden and Cook County Boot Camp (CCBC) partnered to create a three-quarter-acre farm within the CCBC compound. The farm is one of the educational programs that serve inmates during their incarceration. Participants in the Boot Camp Garden grow, maintain, and learn about organic vegetable production. Vegetables are used in the mess hall and donated to local food pantries.

SHORT COURSES ON ORGANIC VEGETABLE PRODUCTION

Windy City Harvest offers a series of monthly short courses on organic vegetable production and post-harvest food preservation starting in January 2010. The courses will be offered at the City College of Chicago Arturo Velasquez Institute (2800 S. Western Avenue).

Visit www.chicagobotanic.org/windycityharvest for details.

For more information contact Angela Mason, director of community gardening, at windycityharvest@chicagobotanic.org or by calling (847) 835-6970.



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