

Alice's Garden Farmers Training Project Information Sheet

The History of Alice's Garden

Alice's Garden is a two-acre urban farm and community garden located at 2136 N. 21st Street in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Sometime during the late 1970's (no exact date has been found), Milwaukee County gave the go-ahead for a community garden on Garfield Avenue, between 20th and 21st Streets, under the leadership of Milwaukee County Cooperative Extension. The original garden was almost twice as large as the garden that now exists. When Milwaukee Public Schools wanted to enlarge the play area and parking lot for Brown Street Academy, a deal was struck. In exchange for the land, the school system paid for an irrigation system, including 14 spigots. They also upgraded the existing perimeter fence to a chain-link fence. Several years later, a youth garden quadrant was added to the garden. The garden was eventually named Alice's Garden after Milwaukee County Cooperative Extension Director

In 2006, at the invitation of Milwaukee Cooperative Extension's department of 4-H and Youth Development, SeedFolks Youth Ministry, under the leadership of Venice R. Williams, was invited into the garden to expand their existing, city-wide, youth and family programming and to further develop the urban agricultural programming at Alice's Garden. SeedFolks brought to the garden programs such as the Garden Mosaics Earn & Learn Program, SeedFolks Reading Circles, Reclaiming and Nourishing Family Traditions, and Brown Boys Bonding Thru Books.

Under the auspices of the Center for Resilient Cities, the garden property underwent redesign and reconstruction in 2009-2010 to accommodate public garden plots, programmatic garden areas, and facilities that help promote healthy eating choices. Physical improvements included soil remediation, drainage enhancements, tool storage, a covered gathering space, bench seating, picnic tables, outdoor cooking facilities and a system of hardened pathways. Enhancements were made possible through funding support from private and public entities.

The garden has become a dream come true for the neighborhood residents and the many people and organizations whose hands and visions have made the garden the jewel that it is today. In May of 2012, Alice's Garden became incorporated as an independent, not for profit organization. Fatuma Emmad serves as the Urban Farm Manager. Venice R. Williams is Director of Alice's Garden.

Farmers Training Project

Alice's Garden has one dozen different programs and projects, some offered seasonally, and others year-round. The Farmers Training Project (FTP) for high school age youth and adults, teaches cultural farming education, introduces a variety of sustainable agriculture models, provides a grounding in culinary capital and food culture, and teaches economic development through urban agriculture. Upon completing the orientation and basic training, participants will be guided through one of four training tracts, based on interest and skill.

Any City of Milwaukee adult resident, high school age through adult, may apply to be a part of the Alice's Garden Farmers Training Project.

Alice's Garden Farmer Training Project Goals and Objectives

- To provide accessible, comprehensive, agricultural training to residents of Milwaukee.
- To re/introduce farming as an honorable life-pathway.
- To chip away at the unemployment rate for African American males in the City of Milwaukee.
- To assist in strengthening economic growth in the City of Milwaukee by continuing to live into the vision for HOME GR/OWN.
- To support local businesses through field work placement and on-site training.
- To equip new farmers with relevant and measurable, knowledge, skills and tools to make informed decisions that lead to successful agricultural operations.
- To encourage farm entry by removing the barriers in four major areas facing the farmer from urban areas: 1) access to training, education and technical assistance; 2) access to land; 3) access to capital and credit, and; 4) access to markets.
- To cultivate farmers of color for the Fondy Farm.

2013 FARMERS TRAINING PROJECT IMPORTANT DATES

Wednesday, April 10	Adult Application Deadline
Monday, May 6	High School/Young Adult Application Deadline
Saturday, April 13	Adult Orientation