

Atlanta Local Food Forward

Work Group Session: Backyard Gardens / Urban Agriculture

(TOTAL of 13 in attendance, including facilitators)

FACILITATORS:

Kyla Zaro-Moore- Oakhurst Community Garden, Daron Joffe- Farmer D Organics

NOTETAKER:

John R. Naugle, Atlanta: City of Peace, Inc.

Participants: Sally, Wendy, Donnata, Susan, Ellen, Liz, Julie, Duane, Collins, Lora

Brainstorming

- Synergy: online communities, list-serve benefits, urban farmer training, biomass sources, variety selection, education, online/TV./community info sources, books, visiting farms, rogueapron.com, veggietrader.com,
- Challenges: applying info to local needs, microclimates, site design, availability of sun, drainage, air pollution, lack of experience, conflicting info., “show me”, city chloro-water vs. rain water,
- Opportunities: mentoring, reconnecting with cycle of life, physiologically, spiritually, physically; gardening empowers folks with self-sufficiency, Food Not Lawns,

Discussion/Planning

- What are the benefits to Backyard Gardens / Urban Agriculture? They build a connection with individuals, family members and neighbors. Promotion links people with other like-minded individuals resulting in meaningful relationships. Local supplies of food-stuffs yield a savings to families and community.

Summary

- **Partners:** urban master gardener program, local nonprofits, peer-to-peer certification, food banks, SE Horticultural Society,
- **Policies:** neighborhood/condo associations, county issues, noise and bacteria ordinances, tax incentives, types of composting, pesticide limitations, government land use/right-of-ways, rainwater collection permits
- **Plans:** Resource Guide, backyard gardener network, plant-a-row for the hungry, institutional gardening, seed swaps, harvest festivals, dedicating peace gardens with peace poles, weekly “ALFI” is coming to dinner-parties, monthly full-moon parties, chicks-in-the-city, elevator-talk, tour of backyard gardens, classes for EBT and WIC participants. Local Gardens save families money and gas, plus the networking with those around them builds collective purpose, security and networking/commerce.

Top IDEAS For Harvest Presentation (actionable items)

- 1) Create an ALFI Resource Guide for Backyard Gardens & Urban Agriculture (includes map, editable wiki-pages, web-links, online forums, etc.)
- 2) AFLI “Grow Local Campaign” [bumper stickers, create happy smiley-face logo of “ALFI” with bright colorful aerial image of metro-Atlanta’s patch-work of many green gardens inside I-285]
- 3) Education (direct and online) about Backyard Gardens & Urban Agriculture empowers individuals, nurture families, whole neighborhoods, and beneficially affects the whole city (create/influence curriculum for K-12 schools, churches, synagogues, mosques, neighborhood associations, nonprofits, etc.).
- 4) Political Action Committee Initiative to form/influence policy locally, statewide, regionally, nationally (parse-out city/county, state/federal “developer” guidelines with help GA Dept. of Ag. /Farmers Market Bulletin, Food Co-ops, Community Activists, plus Civic, Government and Business leaders, etc.)