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Subject: News from the Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture

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THANK YOU!

Greene Mission: Let's Get Growing!

First season youth garden yields plenty of fresh food and great experiences for all involved

Angela Greene grew up in Northeast Kansas City, KS, in what was once a thriving neighborhood. When she returned to live there in 2007, the area had changed and fallen into decline. Angela decided to do something to help her home and her community. This is the beginning of her journey.



Salt of the Earth Third Street C.O.G. Youth Garden Project

By Angela Greene

A wise amphibian once said, "It's not easy being green." Little did I know this time last year that this saying would become one of my life mantras. I can't say I was born a poor black child because if we were poor, I didn't know it. I come from a working class background. My mother was an elementary school teacher and my father a welder. She grew up in a housing project in East St. Louis, IL, and he spent much of his adolescence in the rural suburbs of Edwardsville, KS. What does this have to do with urban agriculture? Well, their union produced an unusual hybrid in me. I am a city girl, mostly, with just enough country in me to want to farm.

In 2002, my family was forever changed when my youngest sister was left permanently injured from a stroke she suffered while recovering in the hospital from a near-drowning. We knew the road ahead was not only going to be uphill but practically up Mt. Everest. With faith and prayer we made it through the initial trials but our everyday lives would be different now. My sister now requires total care and we are constantly guarding her health. My mother was always cooking up something good, so it came naturally that she would focus on my sister's diet. In 2005 we learned of Joe Jennings' urban farm in Kansas City, KS, and joined his CSA. I was bitten by the farming bug while picking peppers.

My family owns land two blocks away from our home. Every summer it is a task just to keep it cut so the city does not

fine us. When I told my mother I wanted our family to grow food there, she got busy. She found out about the Farmers' Expo held in Kansas City each spring and we attended. I canvassed the booths and began talking to Katherine Kelly of KCCUA and told her of my plans for our land. What I did not mention to her is that I also wanted to begin an urban growing project for the youth and the community surrounding my church--Third Street Church of God in Kansas City, KS, under Pastor Timothy L. Jones. The church owns land that's underutilized and there is a great need to involve young people in getting in touch with the land. Moreover, the church campus is flanked by the Juniper Gardens housing project--one of the oldest housing projects in Kansas City, KS.

Katherine and I gathered soil samples and found that my family's land was suitable for growing but the church's land was not. I thought our dreams of being urban farmers at Third Street Church of God were dashed. Then Katherine extended an invitation to our group (now called Salt of the Earth Third Street C.O.G. Youth Garden Project) to share a quarter acre plot at the Juniper Gardens farm project. We have been growing ever since. Throughout the season we have provided parishioners and the community with fresh organic produce and taught the young and young-at-heart valuable lessons on urban farming, environmental issues, nutrition, non-traditional produce (there is more to a garden than tomatoes) and entrepreneurship.



Angela Greene (top right) with young urban farmers

The young people have taken to farming with mixed emotions; they are not used to the physical work, but everyone gets excited when they see their work growing. They have been exposed to the likes of Swiss Chard and composted chicken manure--they prefer the chard! We have had success (watermelon!) and failure (pumpkins). We have people watching and supporting our efforts. We have just begun this farming adventure and are already looking forward to next season.

And I should tell you that, in addition to launching the youth garden, I also started farming our family's garden this year. The work never ends and most of the time I feel ignorant. But it seems that I have many gardening guardian angels and I love it! We've never eaten better!

Angela Greene can be reached at greenemission@aol.com.

Urban Agriculture Offers Abundance in Hard Times

In making difficult choices under economic strain, it's best to take the long view

By Katherine Kelly

When I lived in Boston, I gardened in a friend's backyard next to an asphalt-covered lot. The asphalt was old, the lot wasn't used for anything other than an occasional soccer game and hanging out by neighborhood youth. What was noteworthy about the lot was the way that, as the asphalt crumbled, weeds emerged from the crumbles. The smallest crack would be the occasion for an ailanthus seed to germinate, grow, and develop into a sturdy tree in a remarkably short period of time. Burdock, nightshades, plantain and other weeds would quickly become established, their vigorous growth cracking the pavement open even more.

Our own garden, a few yards away, had soil that we had amended heavily with leaf mold from the Forest Hill Cemetery (they had huge piles of leaf mold there; you could carry away as much as you wanted for free). The soil the weeds were growing in next door had been covered by asphalt, driven over by cars, deprived of oxygen, water, and organic matter, and yet, somehow, the plants were finding a way to grow. I don't know if our collards and tomatoes would have been able to survive there, but the weeds were, and they thrived. Side by side, the two soils were evidence of nature's determination to produce life and be productive.

I find myself thinking about this lot and my old garden right now in relationship to the economic challenges our communities are facing. I wake up every morning to stories on NPR about falling stock values and layoffs and I worry about what this will mean for the people I care about. How will local farmers, already on the economic edge, make any money when people are cutting back on their food dollars? How will families balance their desire to eat more healthily against the stark reality that highly processed food offers more calories per dollar than fruits and vegetables? How will the young organizations and projects working to teach people about gardening, about local foods, and about growing good food for low income communities survive in a tightening giving climate? Our movement towards urban agriculture and local foods is still a movement, not yet fully established, and so we are vulnerable to big social changes such as we're seeing right now.

My Boston garden and the lot next door though offer some good lessons and metaphors for how we can respond to the economic crisis and rising food costs.

First, with a little bit of civic support in the form of free leaf mold, a tiny back yard garden was able to produce a lot of vegetables, enough for my household, my friends household, and her landlords household. And growing these vegetables was cheap, both in time and in money.

Second, nature wants to grow and is determined to grow even under the most unpromising circumstances. And if weeds can find niches of soil to germinate and grow from, so can we humans, both literally and metaphorically.

Third, the other part of the story is that our vegetable garden was noteworthy for its very existence. Rebecca and I became go-to people for friends and neighborhood people looking to start their own gardens. And, because I was working on an organic vegetable farm in a nearby suburb at the same time, I brought in a wider range of knowledge and resources which we in turn could offer other people.

Fourth, Rebecca and I both knew about cooking and processing vegetables. She had grown up in Akron, Ohio where her father, in addition to a full-time job and a landscaping business on the side, grew a massive garden at the edge of town and processed everything he could so the family had their own vegetables to eat through the winter. I had grown up helping my aunt and a family friend freeze, can and pickle vegetables; so I knew "enough to be dangerous" when it came to keeping your harvests for the winter and together with Rebecca I passed this knowledge on to others.

The economic crisis is forcing people to pay attention to what they eat and what it costs. We can respond in two ways to rising food costs. We can move all our purchases to the inside aisles of the chain grocery stores where calories are cheap and nutrients are few and far between. We can do this, and, as a nation, continue to get fatter and sicker while paying in increased health care costs and reduced productivity what we saved on cheap food.

Or, we can decide that, with our limited food dollars, this is the time to grow our own food as individual families and as communities. We can decide to invest in seeds and soil and home gardens. We can decide that, as families, foundations, businesses, and governmental agencies, this is a good time to invest in the commercial urban farms and the go-to places where we can learn about food production and about greater community self-sufficiency. We can decide that our communities need the healthy food grown by gardeners and urban farmers. We can decide to nurture and promote the educational skills of urban farmers and gardeners so they become agents of change in their communities, advocating for health, self-sufficiency, and greater local control over our economic lives.

The economic crisis can become a force that motivates us to re-root in our communities, to use the empty and unproductive lands in our cities to create food abundance in a time of cash scarcity. It can become an opportunity for us to turn to productive green space as a source of beauty and sanity. The global economic crisis can be a motivator for us to turn to community relationships, to urban farms as a gathering place, a place of learning, of health and of self-sufficiency.

We have a lot of hard choices ahead of us. Lets choose, on the food front, to support self-sufficiency, health, and opportunity.

Katherine Kelly can be reached at katherine@kccua.org.

Federal Employee Giving Program Makes Helping Urban Farms Easy

For the third year, KCCUA participates in Combined Federal Campaign

If you work for Uncle Sam, you know that this is the time of year when nonprofits from around the area and beyond appeal to you for support. KCCUA is no exception. Please consider us in your year-end giving under the Combined Federal Campaign. If you have made gifts to us in the past, please renew your pledge and let us know that you still care about urban food production. If you have given us a one-time cash donation, consider spreading out your contribution via payroll deduction. It all starts with getting a pledge card from your local CFC canvasser. Or if you have questions you may want to jump to the CFC's regional website at www.heartlandcfc.org (if you live outside the region, check out the national website at www.opm.gov/CFC/). KCCUA's CFC code is **18178**. Using this code on your pledge card will direct your donation to us.

Also, please let us know if you would like us to come to your federal workplace and give a presentation about our work with urban farmers and communities. We'd be thrilled to tell you and your colleagues more about this important work. Email Semie Rogers at semie@kccua.org to discuss how and when we could visit your office.

We sincerely thank you for your support!

A Taste of Home-Cooking, East African Style

KCCUA teams up with local chefs to help refugee farmers reach more customers

Bonnie Winston is a food professional "at large" who has cooked, catered, taught, styled, trained, designed, written and

consulted on all matters of food. She is particularly interested in fresh, local, natural foods, their cultivation, preparation, variety, quality and taste. Bonnie is among several Kansas City culinary professionals who are making time to visit with refugee farmers from the Juniper Gardens Training Farm to observe them as they prepare a traditional meal. The observations will be compiled in flyers and recipe cards to assist the refugee farmers in marketing their produce.



By Bonnie Winston

Late afternoon, August 14th, KCCUA's Katherine Kelly, myself and our indispensable interpreter Ayan Arale set out to visit Khadija Yussuf, a small, beaming Somali refugee, in her home at Juniper Gardens in Northeast Kansas City, KS. Khadija welcomes us wrapped in colorful African prints from head to toe. At age 23, she is one of nine children and mother of four. She grew up in a small town in the northern part of the East-African nation of Somalia; she says she began cooking with her sisters when she was 14 years old. In Somalia, the kitchen is the sole province of women. Women do all the cooking, both at home and in Somali restaurants. And by the way there are several such restaurants right here in Kansas City but more on that later.

While the majority of traditional Somali dishes are meat-based (beef, goat, lamb, chicken and camel), it seems likely that the Bantu, the tribe or clan to which Khadija and many of the other women living at Juniper Gardens belong, eat more vegetables. The Somali cuisine has been influenced by the English, French and Italians who colonized them. Pasta, for example, has become a staple in the Bantus' everyday diet, along with basmati rice.

We followed Khadija (with 7-month old Makai tied securely onto her back) into her kitchen where she proceeded to prepare "Kana", a dish based on pac choi greens, okra and other seasonal veggies. Though Americans are used to cutting and chopping on a board, Khadija deftly cut everything in her hands while we held our breaths. She worked effortlessly, efficiently, comfortably, adding, stirring, simmering. I watched her carefully, trying to judge how much, how many, how long. I'm sure Khadija's never cooked from a recipe and probably never will but the delicious conclusion was too good not to share (see recipe below).

Full of enthusiasm, we returned the following week hoping to cook some more with Khadija but we were unsuccessful. Ayan, the interpreter, saved the day by offering to take us to her aunts Towfiq Restaurant, just off Independence Avenue in Kansas City, MO. Ayan's aunt was busy in the kitchen, preparing the day's lunch offering while her husband tended the front of the house.

After asking many questions--and learning that women sit on one side of the room and men on the other--we settled into a booth to experience some interesting new tastes. Anjara is a staple of the cuisine--a flat, spongy, flour-based, fermented bread looking like a pancake that is eaten every morning for breakfast, sometimes sprinkled with sugar or honey to entice the children. It is closely related to Ethiopian injera, a large crepe-like flatbread made from the grain tef. We also tasted a couple of other sweet breads and sambusas, delicious deep-fried, triangular-shaped dumplings made of meat or vegetables.

In Somalia, the mid-day meal is the day's main meal, usually consisting of rice or noodles served with stew-like dishes of meat or chicken, onions and peppers. We sampled one based on sautéed beef chunks, another with ground beef chunks and a third of goat; all very tasty.

TOWFIQ RESTAURANT			
BRKFAST		LUNCH	DRIN
1.00	RICE GOAT MEAT	7.00	COKE
1.00	SPAGETTI LIGHT MEAT & BEF	7.00	DIET COKE
1.00	ALFREDO & MEAT	10.00	PEPSI
1.00	UGALI & SAKUME	7.00	DIET PEPSI
AK	FULL & JABATI	7.00	CRUSH
HOUSE			MANGO
2.00			TE
SS LEG			CA
PI			CC
2.00			
LFU STEAK	MUFO & SAKUMA & SUGAR	7.00	
TOLI STEAK	JAPATI & FULL & MEAT	7.00	
6.00	SANDWICH & HAMBURGER	7.00	
CAKE			
6.00			

Towfiq serves up Somali fare in KC

After lunch, Ayan took us to two other stores on the same block, Al Rahman Market and Sharif Store, just off Brooklyn & Lexington in Kansas City, MO. At Al Rahman we got a good idea of what the Somali community is buying: many dried beans and grains such as adzuki, hominy, black-eye peas, cowpeas, favas and barley. And spices like coriander, turmeric, nutmeg, ginger, cardamom, chilies. The freezer case held collards, melokhia, okra, lima beans and spinach. There was also pita, which they called white bread and ghee. We wrapped up our little excursion at the Sharif Store, chock full of furniture, rugs, clothing, kitchen wares, jewelry and other miscellany.

What a treat to learn about another country, its culture and its food by spending time with its people right here in Kansas City. I'm grateful for the experience as well as for the opportunity to help the refugees better understand our country and the many possibilities for their future here!

And here, as promised, Khadija's Pac Choi recipe. Enjoy!

[Kana](#)

Vegetable Oil, ¼ c
 Pac Choi, 1 bunch
 Onion, ¼ small
 Okra, about 8 medium-size
 Chicken Bouillon Cube, 1 (21gr/1 oz)
 Grape / Cherry Tomatoes, about 1c
 Green Bell Pepper, ½ medium
 Potato, 1 medium
 Water, 1 c
 Salt, ¼-1/2 t
 Cumin, ground, ½ t

Remove stems from pac choi. Roll/gather leaves tightly; chop cross-wise into julienne strips, about 1/8 wide. Heat oil in a medium-sized sauce pan. Stir in pac choi, and cook over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally. Add chicken bouillon cube. Slice onion & add. Add tomatoes, crushing slightly with the back of a spoon. Cut okra into about ½ slices & add to pan. Chop green pepper, small dice; add. Add cumin, cover & simmer 10-15min. Peel potato & cut into sticks, about ¼ thick & ¼ wide; add along with 1 cup water; stir well and cook until potato is tender.

Serves 4-6.

Bonnie Winston can be reached at bonniecrockerkc@kc.rr.com. Towfiq Restaurant is located at 2202 Lexington Ave, Kansas City, MO 64124, (816) 221-0866.

Field Notes from the Kansas City Community Farm



KCCF Farm Manager Dan Heryer with freshly harvested turnips.

By Dan Heryer

At times, it seems that the farm constantly changes. The landscape changes as we till and seed. Plants grow and then thrive, wane and eventually die. Perhaps a single bed will have two vegetable crops and a cover crop in a single season, and give us three cycles of birth, growth and death. We begin our season in snow and ice, seeding hundreds of trays with transplants of tomatoes, onions, broccoli, and lettuce heads. Soon the barren winter landscape changes into spring, so radically different with its flowers and green leaves. Change surrounds us.

However, the most interesting changes that take place on the Kansas City Community Farm are neither climatic nor in the landscape; they are those that occur in the people who farm with us. Undoubtedly, working on the farm this season has changed our apprentices and us farmers in a manner that goes far beyond aches and pains. Our apprentices have gained a unique perspective on agriculture that will probably influence their identities, their future career choices, and even the way they raise their children. We farmers have learned fresh nuances from the soil and the season, and have evolved

our practices ever so slightly. And in addition to learning from the land, we have experienced life and all of the changes that it brings.

Looking back on this season as farm manager, I feel as if I have been at this for years, not weeks or months. In this job, each day is filled with work, sweat and hopes; time passes quickly and today the memory of Jake and I working side by side in the in the cool days of spring seems ages past. I must remind myself that it was this season, not last, that I bought goats with my fiancée, Brooke Salvaggio. Harvesting early spring spinach in the hoop house is little more than a vague memory. At some point, I recall that I felt awkward telling employees what to do each day. And now, I will soon leave this position and move onto an even greater challenge--that of running my own farm. Sometimes change happens fast.

The changes in this land seem trivial when compared to the metamorphoses in myself and my coworkers, and this is only fitting. We seem to have so much control over this land, and yet its monumental changes will occur over a million years. We farmers have a far more transient place on earth, and so the important changes during a season will be our own. So it goes; another season, another set of faces, some light footprints made in the soil, and much heavier impressions formed upon our hearts.

Dan Heryer can be reached at danheryer@kccua.org. Here at KCCUA we wish him and his fiancée all the best in their new venture. Thanks, Dan, for all you have done for us! It's been fun!

Urban Farmer and Activist Honored with Genius Award

Will Allen of Growing Power has inspired many by putting urban agriculture on the map

By Semie Rogers

The MacArthur Foundation has recognized the potential of urban agriculture to feed healthy food to underserved urban populations and to grow healthy communities. Will Allen, pioneering urban agriculturalist and founder of Growing Power in Milwaukee (www.growingpower.org), has received a 2008 MacArthur Fellowship (otherwise known as "Genius Awards"). Growing Power produces food year-round at their 2-acre headquarters in Milwaukee. In 1993 Will Allen began working with teenagers on land he owned, renovating greenhouses, growing food for their community and tending a storefront. The program he designed has grown into an innovative teaching center with an international reputation. Growing Power trains all kinds of people, from neighborhood youth to urban planners, in urban agriculture.

Growing Power grows vegetables in six greenhouses and three hoop houses at their original farm, The Community Food Center. The intensive growing practices rely on composting and vermiculture--every pot or bed has worms in it. Heat from decomposing compost is used to warm the greenhouses in winter. But Growing Power hasn't stopped at vegetables. Fish and livestock are also part of their quest to make high-quality food available to everyone. The greenhouses contain aquaponic tanks with tilapia and perch. Three poultry hoop houses have laying hens and ducks. Outdoor pens house goats, rabbits and turkeys.

On 40 acres outside Milwaukee, the organization produces more vegetables as well as hay, grasses and legumes. The Boys and Girls Club of Milwaukee runs a summer program there called "Food and Fitness." Across Milwaukee, Growing Power partners with community organizations and schools to establish gardens that feed neighborhoods and teach youth. They also coordinate distribution systems, especially the Market Basket Program, which provides weekly deliveries of affordable produce to subscribers in neighborhoods.

Rainbow Farmers Cooperative (RFC), established in 1993 by Growing Power, helps 300 small family farms across the Midwest and Southeast get their crops to market. RFC also provides technical assistance, including workshops, grant-writing help and marketing development. And Growing Power keeps growing: Allen's daughter Erica runs a Chicago projects office, which partners with other Chicago groups to grow food in underserved neighborhoods, including one at Cabrini Green. Job training, youth entrepreneurship and the incorporation of urban gardens in city planning are major focuses of the Chicago office.

What to do with the MacArthur Foundation's \$500,000 in cash? Will Allen told the New York Times that his next goal is to build a five-story off-the-grid center for teaching sustainable urban agriculture. Growing Power sees urban agriculture as a tool for social justice--as a way to fight racism and empower people to build just communities through food production. Their vision: Inspiring communities to build sustainable food systems that are equitable and ecologically sound, creating a just world, one food-secure community at a time. More power to them!

Semie Rogers can be reached at semie@kccua.org.

Gardens of Hope for Victims of HIV/AIDS in Nakuru, Kenya

Urban farms produce income, health, joy for some of the world's poorest families

Editor's Note: Following is another contribution from our colleagues of CGIAR (Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, www.cgiar.org) in Kenya. As is the case in many developing countries, urban agriculture in Kenya is an important means to establish food security and provide incomes to impoverished city dwellers. However, too often projects like the one assisting HIV/AIDS patients in Nakuru are dependent solely on private charitable funding and lack broader government policy support. It is our hope at the Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture that governments around the world, including the industrialized nations, will soon recognize the profound and lasting benefits of urban agricultural activity and begin to support it through policy at all levels. Our gratitude goes to the authors for sharing their remarkable story.



Vegetable garden at Manyani, Nakuru

By Samwel Mbugua, Nancy Karanja and Mary Njenga

Living in a slum is living a day at a time. Urban poverty is increasing at an alarming rate in Kenya and according to the Government of Kenya Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper of 2001-2004, the number of people living in absolute poverty in Nakuru (Kenya's fourth biggest town) rose from 30 to 41 percent between 1994 and 1997. Most of these people live in slums or slum-like areas with limited access to basic services such

as schooling, health, water, electricity and sanitation. Many lack regular income or are unemployed.

Adding to this hardship is the high incidence of HIV/AIDS among slum dwellers. The illness is driving people into dependence on donations and humanitarian assistance for their survival. Faced with joblessness, poverty, illness and a state of desperation, many heads of household begin to abuse alcohol, leading them to neglect or even abandon their families. This perpetuates inter-generational poverty and misery as well as dependency and loss of self-worth, a vicious cycle that is difficult to break given the limited government resources available to solve the underlying economic and social problems.

But now families affected by HIV/AIDS in Nakuru slums are gaining new hope for a better life through a project that is teaching them to grow vegetables and raise goats. One success story is Jane*, a 40-year-old mother of six and once a well-to-do second-hand clothes dealer. Diagnosed as HIV-positive two years ago, she spent all her money on treatment for a disease she hardly knew.

A friend introduced Jane to the Love and Hope Center, a community-based organization run by the Catholic Church in Nakuru which assists people with HIV/AIDS by providing them with medicine and food. Later Jane joined Badili Mawazo, a self-help group for people living with HIV/AIDS. Badili Mawazo is working with Urban Harvest, a program of the International Potato Center, which is helping the community raise 40 Toggenburg dairy goats and cultivate an acre of vegetables that the members eat at home and sell to generate income. Jane joined six other women at Manyani, one of the vegetable plots of the project, where she learned how to grow produce. Besides taking antiretroviral drugs, the traditional vegetables make me stronger every day, she said. I sell the surplus vegetables and the money I earn lets me meet my childrens needs and buy recommended foods like eggs, white meat and wheat.

Urban Harvest is working with Ryerson University and the University of Toronto, Canada, on a food security action research project targeting poor HIV/AIDS-affected urban communities through horticulture and livestock production. The 300 members from 50 affected families in Nakuru were selected after a baseline survey in early 2007. By selling vegetables and keeping dairy goats, they are improving their lives and building up some financial capital--positive impacts that are carefully monitored by project researchers.

Jackson* is a father of two who worked as a guard and a small-time street vendor in Nakuru but he was getting weaker and weaker. I had to stay out in the cold all night sometimes on an empty stomach, he said. A medic advised me to quit this strenuous job. That is when a glimmer of hope shone through his life when he needed help most. Through Badili Mawazo, Jackson joined the Urban Harvest project where he learned to care for dairy goats. It changed my social and economic life tremendously, he said. Now he is a dairy goat farmer. He is happy with what he does and enjoys milking his dairy goats.



Dairy goat being milked; children displaying goat kids in Nakuru

The post-election violence that broke out in Kenya earlier this year badly affected Nakuru's Kaptembwa slum and threatened the security of the dairy goats there. But members of the Badili Mawazo self-help group weathered the storm by building on their strong personal bonds and the governance training they had received through the Urban Harvest project.

The initiative is an attempt to improve the nutritional status, food security and livelihoods of HIV/AIDS-affected households, while creating a sense of responsibility, self-worth and dignity," said Samwel Mbugua, the projects site coordinator and nutritionist. The approach taken by Urban Harvest to involve Badili Mawazo in producing their own food is geared towards increasing self reliance. Jane, the vegetable farmer at Manyani and member of Badili Mawazo, agrees: If it wasnt for the Urban Harvest project," she says, "I would not know how to prepare nutritious meals to meet my dietary needs and feed the family I love.

* Names changed to protect identities

Samwel Mbugua, Nancy Karanja and Mary Njenga work in Kenya for Urban Harvest, a global initiative on urban and peri-urban agriculture sponsored by CGIAR; they can be reached by email at kasimbax@yahoo.com, nancy.karanja@cgiar.org and m.njenga@cgiar.org.

North American Urban Ag Alliance Debuts at Conference on Community Food Security
MetroAg promises to bring support and recognition to growing urban agriculture movement

By Kristin Reynolds



Panelists Roxanne Christensen, Jerry Kaufman, Marielle Dubbeling and Will Allen (top left to right) speaking at MetroAg's forum on urban agriculture.

In conjunction with the annual Community Food Security Coalition Conference, a newly-formed organization held its first official forum on urban agriculture at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia on Saturday, October 4th, 2008. The forum was co-sponsored by the Penn Institute for Urban Research, with financial support through the Cedar Tree Foundation. *MetroAg: the Alliance for Urban Agriculture* is a network of urban agriculture advocates and practitioners from the United States and Canada. The Alliance had its origins at a CFSC conference in 2006, and has since formed as a separate organization with the participation of a bi-national founding group (including KCCUAs Daniel Dermitzel). MetroAg's mission is *to bring together a wide and culturally diverse range of stakeholders involved in urban agriculture (in and around cities) in North America, to share knowledge and best practices and to foster linkages externally, so as to give voice to its advocates and recognition and legitimacy to its activities.*

One of the first projects of the Alliance will be to establish an online resource center for all things urban agriculture. The website will complement the long-standing City Farmer website (www.cityfarmer.org), which has been a clearing-house for urban agriculture information since 1978, and the Food Security Learning Center of World Hunger Year (www.worldhungeryear.org/fslc).

MetroAg's event in Philadelphia was planned to coincide with this year's Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC) conference and more than 90 people attended the Saturday forum. Panelists Marcia Caton-Campbell (Center for Resilient Cities), J. Dixon Esseks (University of Nebraska), and Cynthia Price (Greater Grand Rapids Food System Council), with moderator Wayne Roberts (Toronto Food Policy Council), discussed Policy and Planning for Metropolitan Agriculture. A second panel consisting of Will Allen (Growing Power), Roxanne Christensen (Institute for Innovation in Local Farming), Marielle Dubbeling (RUAF), Jerry Kaufman (University of Wisconsin-Madison) and moderator Domenic Vitiello (University of Pennsylvania) gave perspectives on Sustainable Agriculture in Community and Economic Development.

The third session of the afternoon served as the first official general meeting of the MetroAg Alliance. Led by MetroAg co-coordinators Martin Bailkey, James Kuhns and Joe Nasr, the discussion focused on what would be needed to advance the urban agriculture movement. Participants were asked to comment on this topic, and it is expected that this input will feed into the development of the organization. Similar meetings of MetroAg will be held at other related events regionally.

The coordinators and founding group invite general feedback about the development of the organization to best fulfill the mission of networking and information sharing among the many urban agriculture practitioners and stakeholders in Canada and the US. MetroAg's web site will be at www.metroagalliance.org and is expected to be operational within a week or so. For immediate information and comments please email info@metroagalliance.org or call the MetroAg at 1-888-395-8528.

Kristin Reynolds is a PhD candidate in Geography at the University of California, Davis. Her research focuses on urban and urban edge agriculture in the East San Francisco Bay Area. She can be reached at kareynolds@ucdavis.edu.

Urban Ag Makes "KC's Best" List

Urban agriculture in Kansas City has again been recognized by KC's weekly newspaper *The Pitch* in its Best of Kansas City issue--and not just once but twice. Brooke Salvaggio, owner of Bad Seed Farm and Market in Kansas City, MO, was named [Best Urban Farmer](#) (congratulations, Brooke!) and KCCUA was chosen [Best Nonprofit](#). We're grateful for the recognition and would like to pass on the honors to all the urban farmers and food producers in our city. We appreciate your hard work and passion for working the urban land.

Calendar of Events

Small Business Management for Farmers: A Growing Growers Market Gardening Workshop, Sunday, October 19. Led by Katherine Kelly, KCCUA, and Ted Carey, K-State Research and Extension; for more information contact Laura Christensen at growers@ksu.edu or 816-805-0362.

Refugee Agricultural Partnership Project (RAPP) Workshop. October 27-29, Kauffman Center, Kansas City, MO. Bringing together people who work with immigrant and refugee farmers. The workshop includes a farm tour of the Juniper Gardens Training Farm. Contact Katherine Kelly at katherine@kccua.org if interested in attending.

Farmers Community Market at Brookside Annual Meeting, Saturday, November 15, 10am to 12pm, Drumm Farm, Independence, MO. Anyone wishing to support the market or just be heard is encouraged to attend. Contact Randy Gregg at sweetrosefarm@yahoo.com for more information and directions.

Urban Homesteading Classes, Fall 2008. Rediscover the essential craft of the agrarian life through a complete curriculum of traditional skills for self-sufficiency and personal fulfillment including cheese making, beer brewing, bread baking, herbal medicine making, bee keeping, canning & preserving, and more. Classes will take place at Badseed in Kansas City, MO. For more details, schedules and full class descriptions please visit www.badseedfarm.com and contact Brooke at badseedfarm@hotmail.com for sign-up.

To subscribe or unsubscribe please send an email to info@kccua.org
For editorial comments please contact *Urban Grown* editor Daniel Dermitzel at daniel@kccua.org
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