

# Hattie Carthan Herban Farm

## *“After Church”* Farmers Market

2011 Season Report



Hattie Carthan Herban Farm

49 Van Buren St.  
Brooklyn, NY 11216  
(718) 638-3566  
Before May 15th, 2011



June 30<sup>th</sup> 2011



[hatticarthagarden@yahoo.com](mailto:hatticarthagarden@yahoo.com)

[http://www.hatticarthancommunitymarket.com/#!\\_herban-farm](http://www.hatticarthancommunitymarket.com/#!_herban-farm)



The Hattie Carthan Herban farm and After Church market are grateful to our 2011 Fiscal Sponsor Baileys Inc.

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## 2011 Hattie Carthan “After Church” Farmers Market Season Highlights

2011 was a year of tremendous growth for the Hattie Carthan Community Farmers Market in Bedford-Stuyvesant, with the transformation of a derelict lot into a thriving small-scale urban farm and the creation of a new Sunday farmers market. The new farm project was spearheaded by urban farmer Yonnette Fleming who signed the license in March 2011. Fleming and two volunteers, broke ground at 49 Van Buren St. on May 15<sup>th</sup> 2011. By the end of the month the lot was cleared of invasive weeds and debris and rejuvenated with nutrient rich compost. Plant starts provided by the Hattie Carthan greenhouse, GrowNYC, Green Guerillas and NYRP were put into the ground immediately and our farm began to take shape in a whirlwind of energy. The holistic design and energetic wholeness of the farm reflect the ingenuity and brilliance of its principle designer, Ms. Fleming, whose influence is most prominently seen in the centerpiece herb labyrinth encircled by 40 “grow-bags” housing a plethora of plants, vegetables, herbs and fruits. The Hattie Carthan herban farm is grateful to Greenthumb NYC, GrowNYC , Green Guerillas and NYRP for their invaluable support in the creation of this farm.



### **Hattie Carthan Urban Agriculture Corps – engaging youths on the farm**

The farm naturally became a place of learning for the Urban Agriculture Youth Corps, which took a lead role in shaping its new landscape, and a living example of local, sustainable food production for enthusiastic community members and volunteers. By July the earth was bearing gifts in the form of giant heirloom tomatoes, dazzling cherry tomatoes, shiny collards, rattlesnake beans, and many other varieties of fruits, vegetables and herbs. In the farm's inaugural season, we grew over 30 varieties of fruits and vegetables as well as 81 varieties of herbs. The new farm has distributed over 10,000 pounds of produce. This produce was primarily distributed through our Fresh Connect "After Church" Farmers Market, which was unveiled at the Herban Farm on July 31st and open to the community every Sunday from 1-6PM until November 20<sup>th</sup>.

The "After Church" market supplies residents with fresh, local, culturally appropriate, chemical free food, something that we believe is a fundamental human right. Growing and distributing food directly to the plates of community residents greatly reduces the communities' environmental impact through carbon emissions. It also assures secure access to healthy, nutritious food in an increasingly insecure corporate food system in which food access is dictated by capital interests, not human need, and hunger is pervasive, especially among farmers and peasants. The market distributed approximately 6000 pounds of fruits, vegetables, herbs and value added products to the community, all grown or produced locally. Alternative forms of payment, such as EBT/Food Stamps, WIC, SFMNP, Healthbucks and Freshchecks, were readily accepted and promoted at the market.

Cooking demos and health education in the market:

In conjunction with direct food distribution, the market provided a series of culturally appropriate and relevant health education workshops and cooking demonstrations. Over the season the market hosted 6 cooking demonstrations, 4 herbal and health education workshops utilizing herbs from the farm and a 3 part community composting series, after which residents began a compost drop-off program at the market. In addition, the market offers residents a space in which they can share experiences, knowledge and culture through good food and cross racial, age and socio-economic divides. In October, the farm was recognized as a leader in urban agriculture by the Black Urban Farmers Conference and included on the conference tour. Despite the erratic weather patterns, the market finished the season strong with a November Pumpkin Festival and a grand closing ceremony. The Urban Agriculture Youth Corps, which has quadrupled in size since last season, took center stage at the closing ceremony leading farm tours, selling in market, giving cooking demonstrations and engaging youths, parents and visitors in healthy food discussions.

### **Food Distribution – Reducing the carbon footprint of foods sold in our market**

From July 31<sup>st</sup> to November 20<sup>th</sup> the "After Church" Farmers Market distributed approximately 6000 pounds of fruits, vegetables, herbs, eggs and value added products to the Bedford Stuyvesant community. The market offered a wide range of local fruits, vegetables and herbs with over 100 varieties of produce on display over the course of the season. The market was coordinated by Kenta Darley-Usmar and staffed by community volunteers and Hattie Carthan Urban agriculture youth. All of the food distributed in the market was grown or produced locally (within 150 miles of Brooklyn) without the use of chemical pesticides or fertilizers. On average, food in the United States travels 1500 miles from farm to plate and fossil fuels are burned at every step of that journey, contributing to global warming and the further destruction of our

natural environment. By only supporting local farmers and farms, the “After Church” market greatly reduces the communities’ impact on the environment while also supporting sustainable food production that does not rely on massive amounts of fossil fuels, machinery, pesticides, chemical fertilizers and corporate interests.



Hattie Carthan grown produce on display at the “After Church” Market

### Where does our food come from?

The produce distributed at the “After Church” Market comes from different food production sources: the Hattie Carthan Herban Farm in Bedford Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, The Hattie Carthan garden, Migliorelli Farm, J. Glebocki Farm and Red Jacket Orchard in New York State and Lancaster Farm Fresh Cooperative in Pennsylvania. The newly formed Herban Farm, envisioned and designed by urban farmer Yonnette Fleming, provided over 600 pounds of fruits, vegetables and herbs for distribution in the “After Church” Market. Given that the market is physically located on the Herban Farm, the produce harvested by volunteers and the Urban Agriculture Youth Corps from the farm on a weekly basis and distributed in the market had a carbon footprint of zero.

Over 30 varieties of fruits and vegetables were harvested from the farm for distribution in the market, including 124 lbs of heirloom tomatoes, 52 lbs of cherry tomatoes, 104 bunches of collards, 60 lbs of butternut squash, 70 lbs of green peppers and 65 lbs of Italian eggplant. The farm is also home to 81 varieties of herbs and an exquisite centerpiece herb labyrinth. The farm provided over 100 bunches of herbs for distribution in the market, including sage, Russian sage, rosemary, anise hyssop, peppermint, spearmint, Spanish thyme, leaf of life, bitter melon, lavender, thai basil, Italian basil, epazote, parsley, cilantro, lovage and aloe, among many others. The market also distributed 50 dozen local, fresh eggs from the Hattie Carthan flock, housed in two chicken coops at the Hattie Carthan Community Garden.

Produce from the Herban Farm was supplemented in the market by locally grown produce from family owned rural farms in New York State and Pennsylvania. Over 5000 lbs and 80 varieties of local fruits, vegetables and value added products from Migliorelli Farm, J. Glebocki Farm, Lancaster Farm Fresh Cooperative and Red Jacket Orchard were distributed in the market. Popular items with local residents included lacinato kale, raw honey, baby bok choy, donut peaches, sugar plums, corn, apples, okra and sweet potatoes.

The “After Church” Market supports local rural family-farms as they produce a high quality, chemical free product grown with minimal fossil fuel input. They also form an important part of our local sustainable food system which is increasingly under threat from corporate concentration and monopolization. The connection of small-scale rural farms and emerging urban farms is a key element to creating a local food system that is sustainable, sovereign and secure.



Hattie Carthan Urban Agriculture Youth Corps member Kyle Murphy and volunteer Denory Lawrence with a customer

At the end of every market, perishable fruits, vegetables and herbs were donated to Urban Agriculture Youth Corps members and volunteers. Large donations of produce were also made to local churches and community organizations.

## **2011 Market Events and Promotions**

The 2011 season at the Hattie Carthan After Church market Community Farmers’ Market was packed with workshops and events to promote community health, unity, and cultural celebration. During these years, much promotional effort is required to establish a new market. Since our new market was created late in the season, government maps did not show the new market as a healthy shopping option for community residents. The market held four large scale events, which included the opening and closing ceremonies, a pumpkin festival and day of the Dead live altar exhibit. In 2012, the market will host movie nights on the farm to educate and empower community residents about food and farm issues. The market will also continue seasonal observances on the farm and will produce a teaching herbal festival in order to attract and link herbal communities to the work of the new herb farm. All of the events in the market this year showcased entertainment such as live music or spoken word. These events put the spotlight on

local food and health issues and generated an increase in foot traffic through the Market. Market events also gave us the fodder for promotions to create awareness of, and interest in our Market. They also presented the opportunity to bring together a culmination of methods to educate about food, health and community issues.



**Value added products from the garden/farm:**

In addition to fresh fruits, vegetables and herbs, the market offered residents a variety of locally handcrafted value added products. This included an assortment of fruit wines made by longtime Hattie Carthan Gardener Mr. Simmons. Jams, honey and preserves were provided from Lancaster Cooperative, PA and a host of herbal value added products were created by plant medicine practitioner and resident farmer Yonnette Fleming.



Local handcrafted wines, herbal vinegars, pickles and more in the market

The market was established with the ability to accept EBT/food stamps, WIC checks, SFMNP checks, DOHMH healthbucks and Fresh Connect “fresh checks” as alternative forms of payment. These programs increase access to fresh and nutritious food to a larger cross-section of the community and help lessen economic barriers to healthy food options. Residents who purchased items from the market with EBT/food stamps received a \$2 fresh check coupon for every \$5 they spent, this meant that residents and families using EBT for their fresh food purchases received 40% more for their money. Alternative forms of



payment accounted for 20% of total sales in the market. The market will work to grow participation in these alternative payment programs next season by ramping up outreach and promotion at community centers (especially those with health-based programming), neighborhood block associations and local churches. The market is also listed in governmental agencies such as the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Department of Agriculture and Market.

In 2012 the “After Church” market will widely promote the “Weekly Mixed Basket Program” in order to establish a strong group of residents that look to the market as their primary source of fruits, vegetables, eggs and herbs while creating a more profound relationship with their local urban farm and farmers. The Mixed Basket Program gives residents the option of picking up a weekly produce basket with a prepared combination of at least 5 varieties of fruits and vegetables, herbs and eggs at a reduced cost. Like all the produce in the market, the produce offered in the basket is locally grown and chemical free. Unlike a traditional CSA (community supported agriculture) model of food distribution, the basket program requires no large payment upfront. Food distribution programs, like CSAs, with a large upfront payment for the entire year may be economically impossible for low income resident and a serious barrier to sustained and secure food access. Recognizing this barrier, the Mixed Basket Program offers a monthly payment system that is both affordable and cost-effective. The basket program will be an important source of community support for the market, build a stronger relationship with customers and provide a valuable service not otherwise available locally.

**Inviting Youths into the kitchen -**





The Hattie Carthan “After Church” Market and Herban Farm are living examples of sustainable food production and distribution within a food system that is unsustainable and destructive in its very definition. Building on the fact that the market and farm themselves serve as organic educational models of local sustainable urban agriculture, residents were offered a variety of health and food education workshops over the course of the season. The health and food education workshops took place during market hours and at the heart of the farm so residents were immersed in the space, surrounded by the earth and able to connect the education with real life experience. Over the season 10 cooking demonstrations were offered to residents utilizing fruits, vegetables and herbs from the market and discussing the history, nutritional value and preparation of the produce. Cooking demonstrations were led by longtime Just Food educator Yonnette Fleming and Organic Soul Chef Madea .

Soul Chef Madea also worked alongside Fleming to deliver a larger cooking series to help youth learn to engage community residents and youths around food. Lessons in food safety, knife skills, food preparation and food identification helped our youths to add depth, knowledge and skill to their work handling and demonstrating healthy food preparation. Using herbs grown from the farm, Yonnette Fleming, plant medicine practitioner/urban farmer cooking demonstrations that help community members understand how to utilize herbs in their diet for health and explored the endless culinary options herbs present us with and some of their powerful medicinal properties. Ms. Fleming, also a strong advocate of culturally appropriate food programming and education, offered the community a number of cooking demonstrations using culinary styles, flavors and food that aligned with the cultural background of community residents. In addition, Ms. Fleming offered residents hands-on lessons on how to preserve the herbal harvest for the winter and how to “winterize” oneself with herbs, using herbs to protect from winter colds, chronic pains, flus, seasonal depression and other cold weather ailments. The education came full-circle at the November 20<sup>th</sup> closing ceremony when a group of youths from the Urban Agriculture Youth Corps led a seasonal cooking demonstration for community residents utilizing herbs. The youths, who volunteered themselves for the event, utilized the skills, knowledge and experience they had acquired over the season to educate market goers on the preparation of sage sweet potatoes.



The market also provided community residents with a 3-part composting workshop series with master composters Solita Stevens and Yonnette Fleming . In the first installment of the series residents learnt about the science of decomposition and the elements of a healthy compost system. At the end of the workshop residents were given a 5 gallon bucket with a sealed lid in order to start collecting organic food waste and began dropping of the buckets every Sunday at the market. Residents also learnt about t working with worms as decomposers and together the group built a simple worm-bin which could be used in the home.



### **Community Compost Drop-Off**

The “After Church” market accepted organic food scraps from the community every market Sunday and processed those materials in a 3-bin hot pile compost system. The composting process was overseen by Master Composters Yonnette Fleming and Kenta Darley-USmar and also used as a hands-on educational tool for the Urban Agriculture Youth Corps and volunteers. The end result is a nutrient rich soil amendment which is turned back into the soil on the farm. By producing compost from the communities’ organic waste we are creating a closed loop system of food production and able to replenish the soil without chemical fertilizers. The market collected an average of four 5-gallon buckets of compost each market and a total of approximately 1200 lbs over the course of the season.



Compost Windrow on the farm

Final thoughts by the project founder:

#### **Community Revitalization Final Thoughts:**

In our inaugural season, the community revitalization project created 2 part time jobs through the State's fresh connect initiative. Funding was received through the fiscal sponsorship of Baileys Café to pay those stipends and to do promotions for the market.

In 2012, the market is seeking to incorporate and apply for its non-profit status to better serve our mission of food justice in Bedford Stuyvesant . We intend to grow the number of youths employed by our market programs and to increase herbalism programs on the farm and in the market. Our volunteers and urban farmer has put in over 30,000 hours in sweat equity which reinforces the oppressive, antiquated view of agriculture as free labor which exists in our current food system. Our volunteers work to revitalize land , grow food, grow our soil through composting, sustainably tend animals, train youths and adults about healthy food preparation and have exponentially increased healthy food access for community residents in a neighborhood classified as a fresh food dessert. In order to continue this work and achieve self-sufficiency , our project requires funding to create permanent green jobs now for those who work in the area of urban agriculture.

This is our vision for food justice in the Bedford Stuyvesant community.