

A young boy with dark skin and curly hair, wearing a dark blue sweater over a collared shirt and grey pants, is watering plants in a raised garden bed. He is holding a bright green watering can and pouring water onto the soil. The garden bed is filled with various green plants, including tall leafy ones and some with small red flowers. The bed is bordered by wooden planks. In the background, there is a chain-link fence and some bare trees, suggesting an urban setting.

NEW YORK CITY MAYOR'S OFFICE OF URBAN AGRICULTURE

2025 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

NYC Urban
Agriculture

Letter from the Executive Director



The New York City Mayor's Office of Urban Agriculture (MOUA) was established in 2021 pursuant to Local Law 123 of 2021. In the fall of 2022, the mayor appointed the inaugural director, Qiana Mickie, and the office was fully constituted with the addition of Deputy Director Evan Burr. For the past three years, MOUA has continued to make significant strides in meeting its mandates by implementing community driven programs and initiatives in the areas of agriculture education, climate smart agriculture, economic development, and urban agriculture data and collection.

With equity as its north star, MOUA continues to engage community at every opportunity on the projects and initiatives summarized in this report. Much of the work outlined below has only just begun. As our office pursues the greater goal of building and scaling food sovereignty infrastructure in New York City (NYC) communities, we look forward to fulfilling these projects and expanding this work across our city, in every neighborhood, in every borough.


Qiana Mickie

Reimagining Farm to School in NYC



MOUA completed the successful two-year pilot program in which NYC public school children were engaged in hands-on agriculture education activities with urban farmers and community chefs, both in the classroom and on-site at NYC urban farms. In collaboration with NYC Public Schools Office of Food and Nutritional Services (NYCPS OFNS), support for the program was made possible by United States Department of Agriculture and New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets Farm to School grant funding, totaling \$200,000, through fiscal year 2025. MOUA plans to scale up this popular initiative to sixty public schools citywide over the next two years, potentially touching the lives of thousands of NYC school children, teachers, and parents.

550



students engaged

6



school gardens
constructed

11



school gardens
revitalized

15



fresh food cooking
demonstrations conducted on-site
at NYC urban farms/gardens

NYC School Food EATS



The NYC School Food Enhancing Accessibility, Training, & Support (NYC School Food EATS) successfully convened the city's first-ever school food procurement training program for small New York food and farm businesses. NYC School Food EATS is the first training series launch of the NYC EATS initiative, a MOUA led interagency initiative that provides strong linkages in the local/regional food system through trainings and developing opportunities for increased healthy local food access and procurement within the city to launch.

6



virtual training sessions conducted

9



small New York farm and food hub businesses participated in the first cohort

NYC School Food EATS



In collaboration with Cornell Cooperative Extension Harvest New York, the training featured NYC school procurement, small food business best practices, and resources developed to minimize barriers to the NYC school food procurement pipeline, and Minority and Women- Owned Business Enterprise (M/WBE) certification for small to mid-size food businesses.

Urban Agrivoltaics Rooftop Pilot



In collaboration with the NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) and NYC Department of Education's Office of Energy & Sustainability, MOUA developed the Urban Agrivoltaics Rooftop Pilot program to explore the opportunity to co-locate plants, crops and solar panels, symbiotically, to produce both fresh food and solar energy on New York City rooftops.

3



NYC public school sites identified

1



Request for Information (RFI) issued

Stevenson Educational Campus School Food Forest Project



Photo Credit: Khiry Evanson, Office of Majority Leader Amanda Farias

The revitalization of the now fallow orchard at Adlai Stevenson High School in the Soundview neighborhood of the Bronx, will finally realize a longstanding vision for this unique, food-producing space. With support and collaboration from City Council Majority Leader Amanda Farías, school leadership, and the local community this project, when completed, will represent a significant step forward in establishing true food sovereignty infrastructure in Soundview.

Stevenson Educational Campus School Food Forest Project



Available to public school students and surrounding community alike, the project will consist of the following elements:

Workforce Development – As gardening and garden maintenance positions are developed, training will be made available with preference given to local community members in staffing these jobs.



Agriculture and Science Education Curriculum plus Outdoor Classroom – MOUA and Stevenson High School leadership will collaborate with teachers, students, and community to develop integrated curriculum and activities to ensure active learning in the outdoor classroom setting and in the classroom.



Fresh Food Production – A variety of seasonal and culturally relevant crops including vegetables, fruit, mushrooms, and herbs, are planned to be grown, harvested, and distributed to the students and members of the Soundview community.



Values Aligned Purchasing and Policy

As part of MOUA's ongoing endeavor to inform and implement effective and equitable food and farm policy to support a resilient food and agriculture system, this year MOUA began its effort to explore the implications of the veto of the state Good Food NY bill ([S. 6955A/A. 7264A](#)) by Governor Hochul and limited impact of meeting Good Food Purchasing standards at the city level of procurement. MOUA embarked on policy research and stakeholder engagement to learn more about the current barriers faced by stakeholders and assess how to improve the pathways to [values aligned procurement](#)^[1] in NYC through strengthening linkages to hyperlocal and regional food systems, integrating more agriculture-based policy, and identifying existing critical food system infrastructure requiring further resources.

Through our "Purchasing with Purpose" community information series, MOUA is continuing to foster stakeholder engagement through policy awareness and by bringing more voices to the table. In September, the series kicked off with a Community Roundtable with national leaders from the Center for Good Food Purchasing, Chicago Food Policy and Action Council, HEAL Alliance, and Center for Regional Food Systems at Michigan State University. The Roundtable provided NY/NYC stakeholders insight from leaders with proven track records who have been successful in advocating for the adoption of values aligned purchasing and policy in their cities and/or states. The Roundtable will be followed by a Community Workshop in November 2025, bringing together New York based micro to mid-sized business owners, gardeners, farmers, producers, advocates and other stakeholders in our local food system to discuss opportunities, ideas, and needs that can inform successful development and implementation of values aligned purchasing policy recommendations. MOUA believes these efforts constitute the fundamental building blocks needed to define values-based principles beyond price and approaches that will increase local food supply in city procurement by sourcing from larger regional suppliers, as well as hyper-local producers, and inform stronger food and agriculture policy in our city and state.

[1] Also known as values-based purchasing, is a process that makes purchasing decisions based on a set of principles beyond price such as environmental impact, local sourcing, social equity, and community impact.

NYC Urban Agriculture Data Explorer Hub

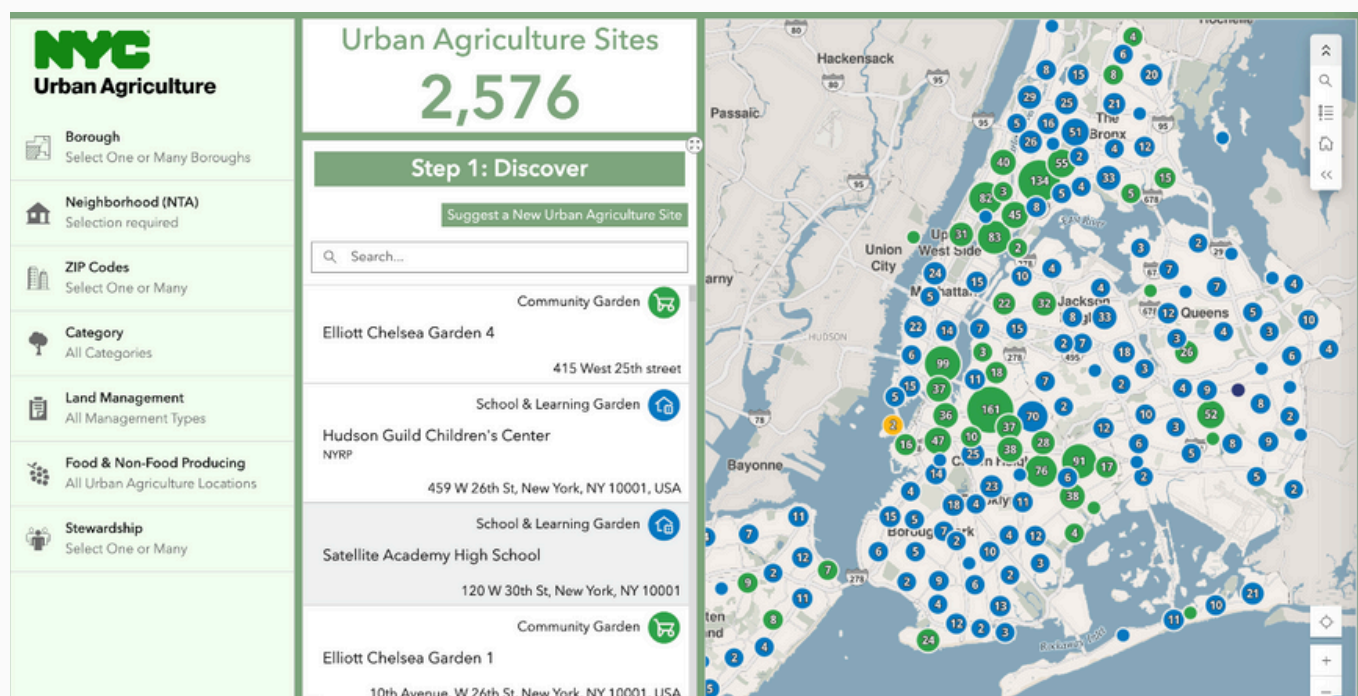
In January 2025, MOUA held its first “NYC Urban Agriculture Data Convening,” a community event with the goal of engaging urban agriculture stakeholders with the Urban Agriculture Explorer Data Hub. The Data Explorer Hub is designed to track food production, wellness, commercial activity, climate mitigation, and other metrics across the New York City urban agriculture landscape. With this Data Explorer Hub, the city has now begun collecting and tracking urban agriculture data citywide, in several areas including school gardens, urban farms, community gardens, and underutilized city-owned land. Key Performance Indicators include:

10 demonstrations conducted

Current datasets: urban farms, community gardens, school gardens, underutilized city-owned land parcels

Future datasets: Paper Streets, comprehensive flood risk map for both rainfall and coastal areas

Plans for community engagement events on-site at NYC urban farms and community gardens



Conclusion



The year's accomplishments also included support for small businesses, community engagement around important legislation for NYC urban agriculture stakeholders, land use assistance for the agriculture community, and collaborations with academic institutions such as Cornell involving climate smart agriculture and planning for food sovereignty infrastructure in neighborhoods such as Soundview in the Bronx, and Brownsville, Brooklyn.

Since the establishment of the office three years ago, with extremely limited municipal resources and only two full-time staff members, the Mayor's Office of Urban Agriculture has still been able to meet our mandate, complete our work, and achieve success in meeting the needs of New Yorkers.