VINES has completed its eighth growing season—wow! Here are some of the great successes we’ve had this year.

With the help of a dedicated team of volunteer site coordinators, we rented all our community garden plots this year! We are proud of the program’s growth and especially the growth in leadership and community cohesion thanks to our volunteers. If you are interested in community gardening at any level, from renting a plot to taking on a leadership role, email natalie@vinesgardens.org or call (607) 205-8108. The Grow Binghamton youth employment program also had a spectacular year, under the direction of Natalie Hughes, Community Garden & Youth Program Manager. New this year, Grow Binghamton partnered with BOCES to offer more positions to youth from low-income households. The crew members came from extremely diverse backgrounds and formed a cohesive, rambunctious and effective group (see article on p. 4). The youth were responsible for all the tasks that go into growing food for sale and donation to local families. In addition to farm work, the youth were responsible for teaching elementary school students at Roosevelt and Ben Franklin Elementary Schools about farming and healthy lifestyles. We look forward to expanding our work with young people of all ages over the next year.

This year, we grew several new varieties of crops and increased production at our Binghamton Urban Farm (located on Tudor St. just south of Susquehanna).
Fall & Winter Gardening
Don’t stop gardening when the weather turns cool!

For many, fall can be bittersweet. The once long and hot summer days quickly turn cool and are marked by thoughts of pumpkins, turkeys, and the sight of leaves changing colors. For those with gardens, however, shorter days can change how a garden functions. Summer crops such as tomatoes, cucumbers, and eggplants don’t make it into the fall. This change can turn off gardeners. However, with proper planning and enthusiasm, there are many crops that will keep your garden thriving well into the fall. Grow plants that stay fresh for a long time (like potatoes and squash) to enjoy throughout the fall and even winter. Some ideas include carrots, potatoes, beets, squash, kale, celeriac, parsnips, leeks, and turnips. You can extend your growing season into the colder months with a few simple techniques, such as row covers, hoop houses, cold frames, and mulches.

For the garlic lovers, an important fall task is finding a quality supply of garlic for seed. If you haven’t grown your own garlic, ask a friend or local farmer, or order through a seed catalog.

To learn more about gardening, attend one of our Green Thumb Workshops or contact us with questions.

-Danny Morales, AmeriCorps
Through Binghamton Farm Share, participants purchase a weekly box of fresh seasonal produce grown by local farmers. In exchange, farmers receive financial support, and as a result, local agriculture is strengthened. Farm Share provides several options to suit the needs of our members: flexible payment options (bi-weekly, monthly, or all at once), six different pick-up sites, and four unique farms to choose from. All of our pick-up sites provide information on how to store and prepare fresh fruits and vegetables as well as recipes to help inspire new ideas. Sign-up next year for fresh veggies each week.

Here’s what makes Farm Share great:
- Fresh, local, and good quality vegetables every week.
- Affordable and flexible payment options. SNAP/EBT accepted.
- Over 50% of participants receive a discount on their shares.
- This, all individuals eligible for the discount were able to receive it. Our generous donors throughout the community help make this possible.

For more info: vinesgardens.org/farmshare 607-238-3522

Happy Farm Share customer at pick-up

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Continuing the Mission of VINES

We are incredibly proud of the success we’ve had over the past five years as an organization—it truly is a testament to the dedication and spirit of our volunteers and staff, but most importantly it demonstrates the community’s belief in our vision and values. The Binghamton community realizes the value in providing residents with access to healthy, affordable, and sustainably produced fruits and vegetables through various VINES programs.

Our success has been reinforced by the financial support of our sponsors and donors. We ask that you consider donating once again this year (or for the first time!) to allow us to continue our growth and to increase our ability to serve more of the Binghamton community. The past 5 years have been very bright for VINES, but with your financial support we can assure you the years to come will be even brighter. Below are our donor tiers:

- Garden Angel ($1000+)
- Steward ($500-$999)
- Cultivator ($250-$499)
- Sponsor ($100-$249)
- Friends ($25 up to $99)

Donations of at least $25 will receive an exclusive VINES sticker (great for cars, bikes, laptops, and more—pictured above) and these donors will be thanked in our newsletter and on our website. All donations are tax-deductible. Send donations to VINES, PO Box 3104, Binghamton, NY 13902 or online at vinesgardens.org.

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Save the Date:

Coffee Bag Silent Auction
Sat, Nov 7th
3:00-5:30pm
Laveggio, Chroma, The Loft at 99-101 Court St

Bid on creative and functional items made by local artists from recycled burlap coffee bags. Free to attend. All proceeds benefit VINES.
Growing More Than Just Produce

VINES’ Grow Binghamton Program Creates Jobs and Leaders

Trenashia, age 15, experienced her first job this summer as part of VINES’ Grow Binghamton program alongside 13 other young people ages 15-19. Grow Binghamton strives to grow thousands of pounds of food for the community through farming on formerly vacant urban lots. When asked about the impact working with Grow Binghamton had on her, Trenashia told us, “When I first came to the farm I felt like I did not know how to do anything. I was really nervous that I would mess up but, I continued to learn and soon I became an expert at things.” Recently renamed as Grow Binghamton (formerly the Summer Youth Program), this program empowers youth to build confidence, gain leadership experience, reconnect with their food, and educate the community about how to eat and grow healthy foods—all while receiving a paycheck. This year the teens grew produce for donations to CHOW and families receiving Farm Shares, learned about cooking, taught nutrition to elementary school children, led tours of the urban farm, and visited local farms. Kylie, 17, reflects, “I was not only able to help my community while at work, but I could also bring skills and knowledge I learned each day home to families in my own neighborhood,” demonstrating the impact Grow Binghamton has on youth’s lives, families, and communities.

The youth in Grow Binghamton develop job skills, leadership ability, and an understanding of and appreciation for nutrition and healthy lifestyles. For more information on the Grow Binghamton program or to apply, visit vinesgardens.org.

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