

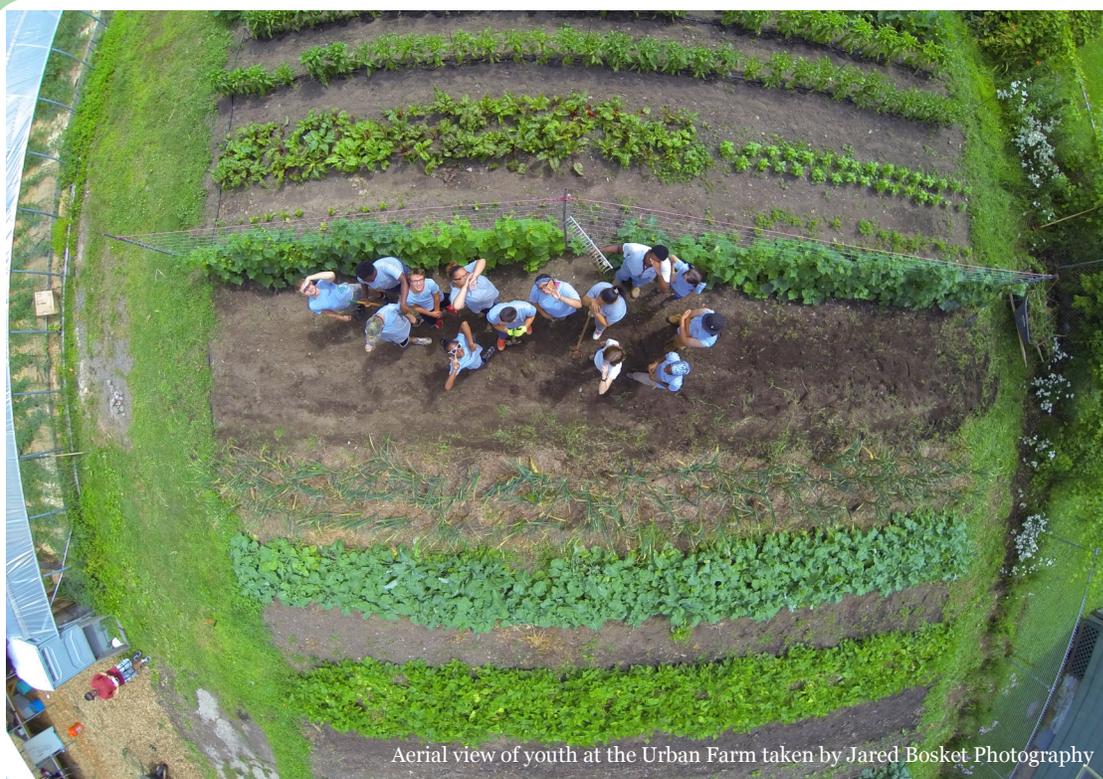


Community Garden Times

Binghamton, NY

Special points of interest:

- City of Binghamton renewed 5-year lease at Urban Farm
- VINES hired 14 youth this summer
- Farm Share has 110 members this year
- Salvation Army builds new community garden on the North Side of Binghamton
- Congressman Richard Hanna and Mayor Rich David tour Urban Farm
- Gregory Ln Garden to construct 2 more handicap accessible garden beds
- VINES at Winter Farmer's Market in Metrocenter 1st and 3rd Saturdays starting Nov 7th



Aerial view of youth at the Urban Farm taken by Jared Bosket Photography

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VINES completes 8th growing season

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



Children from the Urban League Afterschool Program view plants they themselves started from seed at the Urban Farm

St.). This spring, a group of hardy volunteers led by Farm Manager Sean Cummings planted a perennial “food forest” of asparagus, pear trees, hazelnuts, rhubarb and berry bushes. Organic rural and urban farmers across the

country are putting more emphasis on growing perennials, or plants that come back every year, as this technique promotes biodiversity, soil health, and prevents erosion –an especially important consideration for flood-prone areas. In addition to the food forest, the Binghamton Urban Farm has **partnered with CHOW** to grow food at the CHOW Farm on Lawrence Ave. in Conklin, NY. Production of more traditional annual crops has already exceeded last year’s total of 3,600 pounds as we continue to harvest fall and winter vegetables. You can purchase VINES produce at the Winter Farmers Market every 1st and 3rd Saturday starting Nov 7th at the Metrocenter, 49 Court St, Binghamton.

Lastly, the **Farm Share program has expanded to provide affordable veggies to more people.** Under the direction of Farm Share Manager Kate Miller-Corcoran, Farm Shares are available at more locations (including Lourdes Hospital), and pickup times have expanded as well. Also thanks to a partnership with Lourdes, the program offers recipes and information sheets with each share covering questions like: “What is this vegetable and what do I do with it?”

None of this would be possible without YOU. We are very grateful for our volunteers, donors, and supporters. Thank you for everything that you do!

-Amy Shapiro, *Chair, Board of Directors*

“VINES is not only growing like a tree, but is growing orchards of trees for the future.”

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 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.

It is also a good idea to think about crop rotation to help manage soil fertility and to avoid

problems with soilborne diseases. Grow vegetables in different areas of your garden each year to keep them healthy and combat pests.

Even when the weather won't allow more food to grow, you can plant winter “cover crops” to utilize garden space and increase the soil's fertility. Plants like rye, wheat, and spelt all make for good cover crops.

To learn more about gardening, attend one of our Green Thumb Workshops or contact us with questions.
-Danny Morales, *AmeriCorps*



Binghamton Farm Share

Bringing good, fresh foods from local farms to a location near you!

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

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.

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



Youth from the 2015 Grow Binghamton crew

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 re-named 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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Grants

City of Binghamton
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Broome County Youth Bureau
George A. and Margaret Mee Charitable Foundation
Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education
United Way of Broome County

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