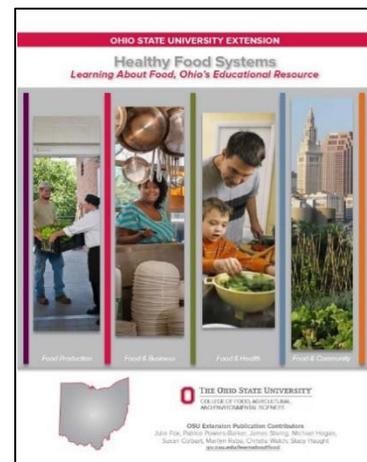


# Healthy Food Systems In Cuyahoga County

Ohio State University Extension in Cuyahoga County offers many educational programs for individuals, families, businesses, and community leaders on topics related to some aspect of food. This publication is part of highlights a few local programs making a difference in Cuyahoga County. Find out more by visiting our website, <http://cuyahoga.osu.edu/>.



## Food Production

Cleveland is a hub for urban agriculture and community gardens. The City of Cleveland supports vacant land use for agricultural purposes and has many policies supporting urban gardening and farming. Ohio State University Extension supports urban agriculture in the community with education and resources including some of the programs mentioned below.

This year, 2017, marks the seventh full growing season for the Kinsman Farm. Kinsman Farm is a cooperatively managed urban farm where new farmers learn how to grow, begin sustainable agribusinesses, and develop farm products for market. OSU Extension and West Creek Conservancy partner to provide the farmers with the research-based education and resources to support successful, sustainable growing practices.

To help foster sustainable growing practices and education, Cuyahoga County Extension hosts Urban Agriculture Workshops throughout the year. Workshops are offered throughout the county and are free and open to the public.

Master Gardeners are a diverse group of volunteers from the local community who share their knowledge and help others by providing leadership and service to their communities through various gardening activities. In Cuyahoga County, there are over 200 active, trained volunteers empowered to educate others with timely, research-based gardening information. The Master Gardener programs are focused on educational programs that promote food production and horticulture in the community, including therapeutic horticulture, school garden programs, how to start a community garden, diagnostics, garden mentoring, and more.

## Food and Business

The ten week Market Gardener Training Program provides a foundation in urban agriculture and small business development. Market Gardener prepares participants to start their own enterprises growing produce and other agricultural products for market. Participants who complete the program are issued an OSU Certificate of Completion, are eligible to apply for a plot on Kinsman Farm, and may be eligible for various funding from the City of Cleveland.

## Food and Health

OSU Extension, Cuyahoga County has robust EFNEP (Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program) and SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) Education that offers nutrition education to targeted audiences in the community. These programs also offer hands on cooking classes, grocery store tours and food tastes throughout the classes. Home food safety and preservation classes, worksite wellness, and select food safety certifications are also offered.

OSU Extension, Cuyahoga County manages the Produce Perks SNAP incentive program that is offered at 30 farmers' markets and farm stands in Cuyahoga County, as well as several farmers' markets in the surrounding counties. The Produce Perks program doubles the purchasing power of SNAP recipients at farmers' markets by providing a free one-to-one match for every SNAP dollar spent. The Produce Perks program increases healthy food access for low-income families while helping to funnel federal dollars into the pockets of small to mid-sized farms, contributing to more sustainable food systems. OSU Extension, Cuyahoga County also manages Produce Prescription (PRx), a Fruit and Vegetable Prescription program, in partnership with key local health organizations. Produce Prescription provides low-income new or expectant mother and individuals experiencing hypertension with vouchers that can be used to procure fresh fruits and vegetables at local farmers' markets at no cost to the participant. This program also supports small to mid-sized farms while addressing the burden of diet-related diseases in the county.

## Food and Community

The City of Cleveland's Community Gardening program, Summer Sprout, has been in existence since 1976. OSU Extension began supporting these gardens in 1977 by providing soil testing, seeds, starter plants, soil amendments, tilling services, and raised bed materials. OSU Extension still manages the Summer Sprout program today and is able to provide gardens with resources and education by working with community partners including the Cleveland Seed Bank and the Cuyahoga County Land Bank. In 2016, Summer Sprout supported 190 community gardens in the City of Cleveland, including those in neighborhood clubs, schools, faith-based groups, and non-profit agencies. Community gardens are collaborative projects in a shared space where neighbors come together to garden. Through the Summer Sprout program, gardens are created to promote a sense of community, and an opportunity for local food production. Community members share in garden maintenance and benefit from the produce of the garden, fresh fruits and vegetables.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

CFAES provides research and related educational programs to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis. For more information:  
<http://go.osu.edu/cfaesdiversity>.