

FALL 2020



HOPE SPROUTS

Growing Hope fosters an equitable and sustainable local food system where all people are empowered to grow, sell, buy, prepare, and eat nourishing food.



Youth in our Summer Teen Program and our Youth & Schools staff on our farm Photo by Misty Lyn Bergeron

Because of your contributions, our farm remains a key food production and educational space for our Ypsilanti community.

During a normal growing season, volunteers are integral to running our farm and it's one of the main ways we welcome the community to our spaces. Though we weren't able to host volunteers this year, we were able to run our

Summer Teen Program and re-oriented the program to be more farm focused. Twelve Ypsilanti teens helped us grow more food, distribute harvests to local food pantries, and support community gardens. We were excited to see them step into leadership roles and feel a greater sense of ownership over the projects they worked on during their eight weeks of employment.



Our Farm Responds to the Pandemic

An estimated 6,400 seedlings were distributed to the Ypsi community through our farm this spring and summer.

With your continued support throughout the growing season, our farm staff had the resources and expertise to contribute to the immediate needs of our community in unique ways. In March--when it was clear this season would look different from years past--we identified what we could do to care for and share resources with Ypsilanti's most vulnerable residents.

Your donation and our community partnerships helped our farm grow food for local food pantries and distribute garden supplies and resources to home and community gardeners.

Helping You Grow

Utilizing a significant gardening supply donation from two employees at a large local retailer, we created seed starting kits to distribute (via socially distancing) to community members and local food pantries. The kits included growing instructions, seeds, seed-growing "pods", trays, and soil, as well as some growing lights.



Joelle from EMU's Swoops Pantry picks up garden kits and seeds



Your contributions made it possible for our farm plan to be altered at the beginning of the season to grow more produce and seedlings



Our Home Vegetable Garden Program partnered with Habitat for Humanity, Ypsi Meals on Wheels and Jewish Family Services to provide gardens to 42 Ypsi households



You helped provide \$6,100 worth of produce to local food pantries and our Summer Teen Program participants

Creating a Food Sharing Network

As a result of our efforts to distribute more produce to the community we built deeper relationships with two Ypsilanti food pantries. We intentionally chose Hope Clinic and Beautiful Gate Church as they use comprehensive strategies for combating food insecurity. For example, Hope Clinic provides medical and dental care as well as a variety of social services and emotional support along with their food distribution.



Urban Farm Assistant, Charlotte, displays early spring crops she harvested for distribution at Hope Clinic

This was our first year donating to Beautiful Gate Church, a food distribution project facilitated by the Mutual Aid Network of Ypsi (MANY). When farm staff reached out to MANY to see how we could support their COVID-19 efforts, they asked us to donate fresh produce to the food distribution they are collaborating on with the church. Irene from MANY said, “Your produce is the freshest and best quality we are getting. The greens, herbs and fresh veggies offer more diversity than folks normally would be getting. Some of our recipients were excited when we had bok choy and tatsoi because a fair number of them are East Asian and are always looking for those things fresh.”

New Sharing Gardens

Our new sharing garden is up and running! Last year we cleared our front perennial beds with help from a group of volunteers from the University of Michigan to make space for a local carpenter to build accessible raised beds. The beds were planted this spring for community members to stop by and harvest fresh food.



Ypsi youth in our Summer Teen Program worked on the farm and were vital to running the farm without our normal volunteer groups

Home Vegetable Garden Program

Because of your gifts, we expanded our Home Vegetable Garden Program to include 20 more Ypsilanti households. We prioritized households increasingly at risk for food insecurity as a result of the pandemic such as low-income seniors, homebound individuals or people with mobility challenges. Thanks to you, we built each raised bed specific to the individual's mobility needs.



HVG participant, Sherene, next to her standing raised bed.

FAMILY FARM DAYS

We are opening our urban farm on September 23rd & October 7th from 5-7pm and September 30th & October 14th from 10-12pm to families in the Ypsilanti area.

Take learning outside! Join Growing Hope on our urban farm where you and your family will learn about ways to grow your own food and have fun in the garden.

Family Farm Days are free for families who are SNAP eligible OR \$15/child for non-qualifying families.

Contact Cassandra@growinghope.net for more details

What's new at Growing Hope? Check out some of our latest additions and upcoming events

Back at the Farm



We are back working at the farm house after repairs and reconstruction from a kitchen fire last fall. Thank you to our partners and supporters for your help during our transition!

JOIN US FOR AN ONLINE AUCTION TO BENEFIT GROWING HOPE

In order to fundraise as safely as possible this fall, we are holding an online auction from October 6 to October 13. Bountiful Harvest, an Auction to Benefit Growing Hope, will offer exciting food, farming, restaurant, and kitchen related experiences and items. From local food celebrities to family farms, many local businesses have donated invaluable items and experiences to support Growing Hope's mission. Join us in celebrating our local food community!

Keep an eye on our calendar for details and ticket information at www.growinghope.net/calendar.

Staff Highlight Nia Thomas-George



We welcomed Nia to the Growing Hope team in March 2020 as our new Youth Program Assistant. Contact her at Nia@growinghope.net.



UPCOMING EVENTS

September 23 Family Farm Days	September 30 Family Farm Days	October 7 Family Farm Days	October 6-13 Bountiful Harvest Online Auction	October 14 Family Farm Days	October 31 Last Day of Saturday Depot Town Market
-------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	----------------------------------	--	-----------------------------------	--

For more information about our events or how to get involved, please visit our website at growinghope.net or follow us:  growinghope  growingthehope