



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.



Your contribution provides learning opportunities for Ypsilanti youth of all ages.

“While reading and learning in the classroom is important, the experience of seeing it with your own eyes has a magic and power all its own,” Mitchell Elementary

School fifth grade teacher, Mr. Popkey said after accompanying his students on a field trip to the Growing Hope Urban Farm. During their visit, 60 students learned about sustainable growing practices on the farm, harvested spinach from the hoophouse, and enjoyed smoothies they made using our bike blender.



Youth Programs at Growing Hope

"I really liked the yogurt parfait. I would definitely make that at home!"

- Growing Hope
Seed to Plate Student

Your support allows Growing Hope to educate and inspire youth of all ages around growing and preparing fresh food. Because of you, we worked with 330 youth in 2019, teaching them gardening and cooking skills as well as how they can more fully participate in their local food community. We provide programming for our young people that is not only educational, but creates opportunities for youth to grow as leaders and changemakers.

Whether it's on our urban farm, at our Ypsilanti Farmers MarketPlace, in neighborhoods, or in the schools, our youth programs are fun, place-based, and encourage critical thinking. Alongside our many community partners, Growing Hope is empowering the next generation to help shape the future of our food system. Your continued support allows us to do this important work on behalf of Ypsilanti youth.

Youth Field Trips at Growing Hope

At the Market

During interactive field trips at the Downtown Ypsilanti Farmers Market, youth of all ages participate in fun hands-on activities where they meet local farmers, learn about locally grown fruits and vegetables, and experience the benefit of supporting small scale farmers.



On the Farm

The Growing Hope Urban Farm provides engaging and experiential field trips for youth. Each field trip includes an interactive tour of our urban farm where youth are encouraged to touch, taste and smell the plants we grow, a hands-on cooking lesson, and a STEM-based garden activity.



Garden Education: from “Seed to Plate”

Every Wednesday afternoon, students learn about and prepare seasonal recipes in our Seed to Plate program at Ypsilanti Community Middle School. Through engaging and collaborative lessons, we work to build a positive relationship to different kinds of foods. By introducing youth to new recipes with familiar ingredients, we expand their knowledge of how different foods can be used and enjoyed.

With your donations, we invest in our local food system by purchasing ingredients for our Seed to Plate lessons - and all our youth programs - from nearby farmers and grocers.



Erickson Elementary students harvest the potatoes they helped plant in their school garden for lunch in the cafeteria

School Gardens in Ypsilanti

Our Farm to School program is part of a national effort to influence food purchasing and education practices at schools to include more fresh, locally grown food. With your support, we worked with Ypsilanti Community Schools to create a School Garden Coordinator position.

This last year students at Erickson Elementary planted two varieties of potatoes in large containers. The potatoes were harvested by students in the late summer and eaten in the cafeteria for lunch. The students loved “treasure hunting” for the potatoes and were especially excited about the purple potatoes!



Teens in our after school program work together to learn about and prepare recipes in our incubator kitchen

After School Teen Leadership Program

With your support this fall, four of our Summer Teen Program participants started our new after school Teen Leadership Program. This program builds on the skills they learned over the summer, providing them with the knowledge and confidence to become the next generation of food leaders.

Every week, teens meet and explore topics related to food access and food justice in their community. They dive deeper into topics of their own interest related to healthy eating and access to fresh fruits and vegetables, such as exploring inequalities in our national school meals program. Equipped with this information, our teens are currently planning a project to advocate for healthier school breakfast options.

**Applications will be open for our
2020 Summer Teen Program
in April!**

For more information, visit
www.growinghope.net/get-involved/jobs-internships
or contact Cassandra Van Dam at
cassandra@growinghope.net

What's new at Growing Hope?

Check out some of our latest additions and upcoming events.

Update about the Growing Hope Urban Farm

The Growing Hope Urban Farm had a kitchen fire in the fall of 2019, requiring our staff to move our offices to The Back Office Studios (a co-working space) in downtown Ypsilanti.

We will be back in the house after repairs and reconstruction in mid-late March. We are so excited and grateful to be moving back to the farm.

Thank you to our partners and supporters for reaching out with concern and offers to help during this time. We feel incredibly blessed by our amazing community.

Staff Highlight Cassandra Van Dam



We welcomed Cassandra to the Growing Hope team in September 2019 as our new Youth & Schools Manager. Contact her at Cassandra@growinghope.net.

SAVE THE DATE FOR ROUND 2 OF THE YPSI FOOD FIGHT

The Ypsi Food Fight is a fun, high energy fundraiser for Growing Hope that engages local restaurants in friendly competition and gives them a space to share their talents. Restaurants challenge each other to a Food Fight! Five judges taste each dish and vote for their favorite. Come see if your favorite wins! Stay tuned for more details...

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

SATURDAY, APRIL 18 2020



UPCOMING EVENTS

March 9 Spring Building Blocks Classes Start	April 18 Ypsi Food Fight	May 2 Downtown Outdoor Farmers Market Season Begins	May 6 Depot Town Outdoor Farmers Market Season Begins	June 20 Growing Hope Community Day
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For more information about our events or how to get involved, please visit our website at growinghope.net or follow us: [f](#) growinghope [growingthehope](#)