



Green Village Initiative

Reservoir Community Farm

Green Village Initiative (GVI) is an urban agriculture organization in Bridgeport. Our mission is to grow food, knowledge, leadership and community through urban gardening and farming, to create a more just food system in Bridgeport. We manage 12 community gardens, an urban farm (Reservoir Community Farm), a Youth Leadership Program and provide support to Bridgeport's school gardens.

Reservoir Community Farm is located on the corner of Reservoir Ave and Yaremich Drive. It is a demonstration farm for growers across the city, a welcoming gathering and learning space for the community, and home to our biweekly farm stand. Each year:

- We employ 18 to 20 individuals to work on our farm each year;
 - Each was a Bridgeport resident in 2018
 - 30% of our 2018 farm team lived within 1-mile of Reservoir Ave and Yaremich Dr.
- We grow, sell and donate over 5,000 pounds of fresh produce for the community.
- We host over 250 hundred Bridgeport public school students in educational field trips.
- 40 community gardeners grow food for their families at the farm.
- We employ and train Bridgeport youth to be community leaders through our Youth Leadership Program at Reservoir Community Farm.
 - High School youth learn job skills, leadership skills, and farming.

Urban Gardens and Farms can have positive benefits on their community including through increasing fresh food consumption and reducing household food costs, reducing crime, and providing opportunities for residents to learn new skills and interests.

- A study by the University of Pennsylvania was published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, noting:
 - “Neighborhoods where vacant lots were cleaned up experienced a 29 percent reduction in gun violence, 22 percent decrease in burglaries, and 30 percent drop in nuisances like noise complaints and illegal dumping. Residents living near those same spaces also reported feeling much safer post-remediation, with 58 percent having fewer security concerns when leaving their homes and more than three-quarters saying they significantly increased use of their outside spaces for relaxing and socializing.”
(<https://penntoday.upenn.edu/news/cleaning-vacant-lots-makes-neighborhoods-safer>)
- A study by Sacred Heart University in partnership with GVI found that high school youth in Bridgeport who had experience working in farms and gardens were more likely to try new fruits and vegetables than their peers.

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