

A rooftop garden in New York City, featuring a greenhouse, raised garden beds, and a person tending to plants. The background shows a dense forest of trees and the New York City skyline, including the Freedom Tower.

**GROW**<sup>NYC</sup>

# Strategic Plan

**In 2023, GrowNYC implemented a new strategic plan** to address New York City's environmental and social challenges. Based on a year-long process, we identified areas of opportunity and need to support our City in meeting those challenges. New York City has changed a lot since our founding in 1970, and so have we.

This plan includes an overview of GrowNYC's updated mission and vision, core beliefs, and the strategic program initiatives that will guide us now and for years to come.



# New York's Challenges

CLIMATE CHANGE

FOOD INSECURITY

AIR QUALITY

WATER QUALITY

LACK OF GREEN SPACE

WASTE TO LANDFILLS

INEQUITABLE FOOD SYSTEM

DIMINISHING REGIONAL FARMLAND



# GrowNYC's Solutions



## OUR MISSION

Empower all New Yorkers with equitable access to fresh, locally grown food, neighborhood green spaces, opportunities to reduce waste, and care for the environment.

## OUR VISION

We envision a New York City where fresh, nutritious food is ensured as a basic human right. Where our foodshed is protected and local farmers prosper. Where all have access to places to gather and grow. Where we handle our waste responsibly. And where all New Yorkers, especially those with frontline identities\*, are empowered to enact their vision of a thriving community.

\*"Frontline identities" includes but is not limited to BIPOC, queer, those with disabilities, and new immigrants



Teaching Garden  
on Governors Island

**GrowNYC's core beliefs underpin our aspirations, guide our work, and support our decision-making. We believe that:**

- Living in a healthy and sustainable environment is a human right.
- People want to be healthy and protect the planet.
- Community engagement is critical to lasting change.
- Everyone has the capacity to care and be agents of change.
- Individuals will practice sustainability if provided with knowledge and accessible services.
- Fresh, locally produced food can also be affordable.
- A thriving farming community is symbiotic with healthy eating in New York City.
- Diverse, inclusive programs and workplaces are necessary to achieving equity and long-term impact.



# GrowNYC's long-term goals increase impact in three ways: Access, Awareness, and Assistance. GrowNYC will take actions that address mission achievement and organizational development:

## ACCESS

Increase equitable access to fresh, locally-grown food to all New Yorkers through economically viable retail and wholesale market opportunities for regional farmers and producers, especially BIPOC farmers and producers.

Enable New Yorkers to reduce and divert waste responsibly to lessen its impact on the environment.

Build and maintain community gardens throughout New York City to provide access to green space and encourage environmental sustainability.



## AWARENESS

Promote nutritious eating, waste diversion, and use of green space as core tenets of a New York City lifestyle that fosters environmental consciousness.

Establish programming in all NYC Public Schools to create a population of future environmental stewards.



## ASSISTANCE

Support aspiring farmers and existing Greenmarket farmers/producers, particularly those with frontline identities\*, to start and run successful farm businesses that build a more just, resilient, and sustainable regional foodshed.

Provide New Yorkers with resources and technical assistance to implement their own environmentally sustainable practices.

---

\*Frontline identities\* includes but is not limited to BIPOC, queer, those with disabilities, and new immigrants

# GrowNYC Program Initiatives

---

## EDUCATION



1. Enhance outreach to NYC residents about how to use their nutrition benefits at GrowNYC sites to secure affordable fresh food, and provide education on the associated health benefits.
2. Facilitate the creation of new NYCHA gardens and resources to support their ongoing sustainability.
3. Expand our workforce development program to create pathways to green jobs at GrowNYC and beyond.
4. Establish garden programming in all NYC schools.

## ZERO WASTE SCHOOLS



1. Codify Zero Waste Schools curriculum and enhance materials to ensure that programming is a valuable resource for NYC Public Schools.
2. Provide maintenance program for Zero Waste Schools to ensure long-term sustainability following initial program implementation.
3. Partner with NYC Public Schools to identify opportunities for schools to further reduce their waste streams.

## ZERO WASTE PROGRAMS



1. Increase participation in GrowNYC's Zero Waste Programs across all 5 boroughs.
2. Support New York City partners and elected officials in achieving the City's goal of diverting waste from landfills and incinerators.
3. Educate New Yorkers on how to compost using the Dept. of Sanitation's new citywide curbside composting program.

## GREEN SPACE



1. Continue to build garden projects with green infrastructure to minimize flooding and stormwater runoff.
2. Improve data collection around community gardens to better assess and locate future NYCHA, community, and school garden projects.
3. Ensure the Teaching Garden on Governor's Island continues to provide free climate change curriculum, garden education, and workshops to students and families.

## THE FOOD HUB



1. Increase food access through our network of community-based and institutional partners by building more robust distribution routes.
2. Develop a comprehensive food safety program that allows GrowNYC to enter large institutional markets and open new business opportunities to regional farmers.
3. Increase sourcing from small to mid-sized BIPOC owned farms who have the scale to provide wholesale quantities of produce.

## FOOD ACCESS & AGRICULTURE



1. Expand our partnerships with health insurance companies who participate in our Over The Counter (OTC) network, expanding food access to more New Yorkers.
2. Actively advocate for the expansion and eligibility of nutrition incentive programs (SNAP/EBT, Health Bucks, FMNP, E-WIC) at local, state, and federal levels.
3. Provide individuals ready to start farm businesses or careers in agriculture with training, technical assistance, mentorship opportunities, and one to one support.



@GrowNYC  
gownyc.org

GrowNYC is a charitable not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization and contributions are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

