



Community Garden & Urban Agriculture Inventory 2016



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Tiger Farm, Tioga Center, NY

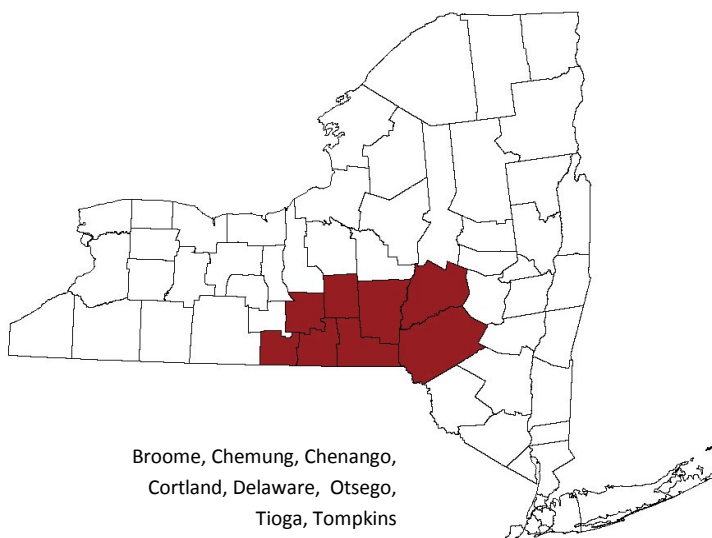
FOOD AND HEALTH NETWORK OF SOUTH CENTRAL NEW YORK

Strengthening regional food security by cultivating knowledge, building networks, and catalyzing collaboration.

The Food and Health Network of South Central New York (FaHN) is a diverse coalition of organizations and individuals whose mission is to develop a healthy and just regional food system. Since 2005, FaHN has united diverse stakeholders in an eight county region to develop a thriving, healthy and food-secure regional food system.

FaHN supports the development of practices, projects, and policies that lead to increased access to nutritious, locally produced food for residents of all income levels in South Central New York.

FaHN utilizes an interdisciplinary, systematic, and regional approach to address hunger and food related needs in Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Otsego, Tioga, and Tompkins Counties. The Rural Health Network of South Central New York (RHN), located in Whitney Point, serves as lead agency for FaHN. The Food and Health Network is guided by an eight person Steering Committee.



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FaHN is a program of the non-profit organization
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SUMMARY & OVERVIEW

Project Summary

The Food & Health Network of South Central New York has been conducting the community garden and urban agriculture survey and inventory since 2010. The first report to focus on the entire eight counties within the FaHN region: Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Otsego, Tioga, and Tompkins was released in 2011. The 2016 survey was created, distributed, and analyzed to add to this inventory and annual report. The data collected will be used to continue measuring progress and tracking ongoing community garden and urban agriculture initiatives in South Central New York.

Based on our own data collection the total number of gardens in the region increased from 104 in 2015 to 115 this year. According to survey responses we received, there were 45 active community or educational gardens and urban farms in the FaHN region in 2016. The survey we distributed gathered basic information, including location, size, and events and educational activities held at the gardens. The respondents were asked to classify the plot as a community garden, educational/school garden, or urban farm. Each plays its own unique niche in the local community.

Educational gardens are increasingly becoming an important part of the curriculum for many schools, and there were at least 19 in the FaHN region in 2016. These gardens enable students to experience for themselves the benefits of growing fresh produce and allow the districts to incorporate the produce into taste tests, classroom snacks or lessons, and even school meals. Tioga Central School District recently completed construction of its Tiger Farm, a school garden that the district hopes will become a living, learning lab where students can apply classroom lessons and learn where food comes from. The farm is in the process of growing 700 pounds of seed potatoes that will be used in meals during the upcoming school year.

Ithaca City Schools started the Dewitt Vegetable Garden in 2009, a successful initiative that produces a variety of vegetables including; tomatoes, kale, onions, carrots, basil, peppers, salad greens, garlic and pumpkins. According to Wayne Gottlieb, a science teacher at Dewitt Middle School, “Most of the work is done during the 7th grade science class. When possible curriculum connections are made and are integrated into the classroom.” He adds, “The garden gives many students their first opportunity to work in a garden and to see the entire process of food production. All students in the school know that some of the food they eat in the cafeteria was grown on their school grounds.”

Community gardens play an integral role in a healthy local food system. Studies have shown that community gardens increase a number of different factors related to community health including; creation of informal networks, community organizing, people’s perception of their own neighborhoods, availability of fresh produce and outdoor activity. Additionally, they serve as common spaces for residents to engage in active citizen participation, sustainable, healthy living and outdoor activity.

From independent research, support from partnering organizations throughout the region, and email and phone correspondence with community gardeners, the following information was collected to create the 2016 inventory. Additional information can be found at foodandhealthnetwork.org, including resources for gardeners looking for future funding opportunities and a map of regional gardens.

Project Overview

- *Purpose:* To inventory the number and capacity of community and educational gardens and urban agriculture initiatives located in the eight county FaHN region.
- *Survey target area:* Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Otsego, Tioga, and Tompkins Counties
- *Outcome objective:* Inventory results will measure the progress of current garden and urban farm activities and will serve as a baseline to measure future changes in those activities.
- *Distribution:* The survey was distributed to 103 gardens and urban farms, and 45 completed the survey, a response rate of 44% percent. Survey participation increased from 24 respondents for the 2011 survey, to 43 respondents in 2012, 44 respondents in 2015, and 45 respondents in 2016.
- *Timeline:* The 2015 survey was updated for 2016 and distributed in the Spring of 2017. The report was completed in July 2017.

SURVEY RESULTS

Summary of Survey Results

The following charts show changes in community gardens, school garden and urban agriculture development by drawing comparisons between 2012, 2015 and 2016 survey results. Survey respondents classified their garden as a community garden, educational garden, or urban farm. A community garden is classified as a common garden where community members have a designated area to grow produce; an educational garden is a garden at/near a school or other institution where students or community members are learning about and involved with growing food; and an urban farm a for profit or not-for-profit farm that produces food for sale through retail, wholesale, or consumer shares.

Note: Certain totals do not reflect the total number of gardens participating in the survey due to lack of response of certain survey categories.

Gardens in the FaHN Region, 2012-2016

The table below shows the number of confirmed gardens and urban farms in the FaHN region, including those without current data or survey responses.

County	2016	2015	2012
Broome	26	22	18
Chemung	14	13	8
Chenango	5	5	2
Cortland	10	9	9
Delaware	17	17	16
Otsego	4	5	2
Tioga	9	5	5
Tompkins	29	28	55
TOTAL	115	104	115

Surveys Completed in Each County, 2012-2016

The table below shows gardens/farms in the FaHN region for which survey data was gathered.

County	2016	2015	2012
Broome	16	14	13
Chemung	5	4	5
Chenango	2	3	2
Cortland	4	4	4
Delaware	4	4	6
Otsego	2	2	2
Tioga	5	3	3
Tompkins	7	10	8
TOTAL	45	44	43

SURVEY RESULTS

Gardens by Category

The chart below reflects responses to the survey question, “How would you characterize the garden or urban farm?”.

* The category “Gardening Project” was not included in the 2015 or 2016 survey. Several community gardens, educational gardens, and urban farms donate produce to food pantries throughout the FaHN region.

Category	2016	2015	2012
Community Garden	23	18	16
Educational/School Garden	19	22	15
Urban Farm or Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)	3	4	2
Gardening Project growing food for food pantries, etc.*	n/a	n/a	10
TOTAL	45	44	43

Expansion of Gardens/Farms

The chart below reflects responses to the survey question, “Does the garden or urban farm have plans to expand in size and/or increase the number of those being served by the project?”.

*Category combined with “Plans to Expand” in the 2015 and 2016 survey.

Category	2016	2015	2012
Plans to expand the garden/farm	15	11	18
Plans to involve more people in the garden/farm*	n/a	n/a	8
Possibly	5	5	3
No/Not at this time	25	28	15
TOTAL	45	44	44

Structure of the Gardens

The chart below reflects responses to the survey question, “What structures currently exist in the garden or urban farm? Please choose all that apply?”.

Category	2016	2015	2012
Compost	31	32	27
Fence	33	33	29
Greenhouse/Hoophouse	8	9	10
Raised Beds	34	35	32
Shed	21	23	20
Pond	1	4	3
Rainwater Catchment	9	7	4
Pathways	25	26	22
Educational Signs	9	10	6
TOTAL	45	44	44

QUICK FACTS BY COUNTY

The following quick facts provide a summary of survey results for each county in the FaHN region. Totals shown are for those gardens/farms represented in the survey and may not reflect the total number of gardens and urban farms in each county.

Broome County

- **Community Gardens:** 8 gardens (50%)
- **Educational Gardens:** 6 gardens (37%)
- **Urban Farms:** 2 farms (13%)
- **Hosting public/private events:** 11 gardens/farms (69%)
- **Educational programming:** 16 gardens/farms (100%)
- **Plans to expand:** 8 gardens/farms (50%)
- **Compost activity:** 13 gardens/farms (81%)
- **Donating produce:** 12 gardens/farms (75%)

Gardens included in the 2016 inventory¹: CHOW Farm, Deposit Elementary School Garden, Discovery Center Story Garden, John Donnelly Memorial Garden, Not so Secret Teddy Bear Garden, Binghamton Urban Farm, VINES: Corbett Ave. Community Garden, VINES: Gregory Lane Community Garden, VINES: Liberty Street Community Garden, VINES: Mather Street Community Garden, Salvation Army Community Garden, VINES: Columbus Park Community Garden, United Presbyterian Church Garden, Woodrow Wilson School Garden, Sunflower Park Community Garden, Lisle Community Garden

Other gardens not included in the 2016 inventory: Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd Garden, Maine-Endwell Spartan Garden, Otsiningo Park Community Garden, Phelps Park Community Garden, River Rock Gardens, Trinity Memorial Episcopal Church Garden, Valley Church Community Garden, VINES: Front Street Community Garden, VINES Laurel Ave. Community Garden, VINES Pine Street Community Garden

GARDEN SPOTLIGHT: VINES, BINGHAMTON, NY

Volunteers Improving Neighborhood Environments (VINES) currently operates 10 community gardens in the city of Binghamton, NY, and manages the Binghamton Urban Farm. Many of their gardens are located on formerly blighted properties. Their Liberty Street Community Garden provides fresh produce to an area of the city that lacks a full service grocery store. According to Executive Director Amelia LoDolce the garden, “has become a social hub in the neighborhood.” She added, “Along with help from the Healthy Lifestyles Coalition’s programming at the Lee Barta Community Center, two of the garden members have collectively shed 100 pounds in the last year.”



Liberty Street Community Garden



Corbett Ave Community Garden

QUICK FACTS BY COUNTY

Chemung County

- **Community Gardens:** 3 gardens (60%)
- **Educational Gardens:** 2 gardens (40%)
- **Urban Farms:** 0 farms
- **Hosting public/private events:** 2 gardens (40%)
- **Educational programming:** 5 gardens (100%)
- **Plans to expand:** 1 garden (20%)
- **Compost activity:** 4 gardens (80%)
- **Donating produce:** 5 gardens (100%)

Gardens included in the 2016 inventory²: Chapel Park Community Garden, Food Bank Garden, Katy Leary Community Garden, Pantry Patch, Quatrano Park Community Garden

Other gardens not included in the 2016 inventory: Brand Park Community Garden, Creekside Community Garden, Economic Opportunity Program Community Gardens, Erin Community Garden, Hathorn Park Community Garden, Pirozzolo Park Community Garden, Southside Community Center Garden, Victorian Row Community Garden, Woodlawn Community Garden

Chenango County

- **Community Gardens:** 2 gardens (100%)
- **Educational Gardens:** 0 gardens
- **Urban Farms:** 0 farms
- **Hosting public/private events:** 1 garden (50%)
- **Educational components/programming:** 0 gardens
- **Plans to expand:** 1 garden (50%)
- **Compost activity:** 1 garden (50%)
- **Donating produce:** 1 garden (50%)

Gardens included in the 2016 inventory³: Bainbridge Community Garden, Norwich Community Garden

Other gardens not included in the 2016 inventory: Afton Community Garden, Greene Community Garden (Cook Park), McDonough Community Garden



Katy Leary Community Garden



McDonough Community Garden

QUICK FACTS BY COUNTY

Cortland County

- **Community Gardens:** 1 garden (25%)
- **Educational Gardens:** 2 gardens (50%)
- **Urban Farms:** 1 farm (25%)
- **Hosting public/private events:** 3 gardens/farm (75%)
- **Educational programming:** 3 gardens/farm (75%)
- **Plans to expand:** 1 farm (25%)
- **Compost activity:** 3 gardens/farm (50%)
- **Donating produce:** 1 farm (25%)

Gardens included in the 2016 inventory⁴: Lime Hollow Nature Center, Main Street Farms, McEvoy Children's Garden, Walnut Island Farm

Other gardens not included in the 2016 inventory: Common Ground Community Garden, Cortland United Methodist Church Community Garden, Harnett Elementary School Garden, Master Gardener Garden, McGraw Community Garden, Village of Homer Community Garden

GARDEN SPOTLIGHT: McEVOY CHILDREN'S GARDEN, CORTLAND, NY

The McEvoy Children's Garden has served as a therapeutic garden for school aged children at the McEvoy Educational Campus in Cortland, NY since 1999. The garden contains primarily flowers and trees but they are currently in the process of adding an aquaponics system, with the hope of increasing vegetable growth for their students and staff. Susan Thomas, a Program Director at the McEvoy Educational Campus, says, "Our students benefit physically, emotionally and behaviorally, they use the garden in many ways. During recess they play in the forts and sand pit and classrooms incorporate learning activities to supplement the curriculum." Additionally, building trades students at the school are currently working on a project to make the gardens pathways more accessible.



McEvoy Children's Garden



McEvoy Children's Garden

QUICK FACTS BY COUNTY

Delaware County

- **Community Gardens:** 1 garden (25%)
- **Educational Gardens:** 3 gardens (75%)
- **Urban Farms:** 0 farms
- **Hosting public/private events:** 1 garden (25%)
- **Educational programming:** 3 gardens (75%)
- **Plans to expand:** 2 gardens (50%)
- **Compost activity:** 4 gardens (100%)
- **Donating produce:** 2 gardens (50%)

Gardens included in the 2016 inventory⁵: Andes Community Garden, Delaware Opportunities Garden, Sidney Central School Garden, Stamford Central School Garden

Other gardens not included in the 2016 inventory: Charlotte Valley Community Garden, CROP Garden/Edible Schoolyard at Roxbury Central School, Delaware Academy School Gardens, Delhi Community Garden, Downsview Central School Garden, Fleischmanns Community Garden, Growing Abundance Together, Hancock Community Garden, Live to Serve/Food for All, Margaretville Community Garden, South Kortright Garden, Sidney Cullman Center, Walton Community Garden

Otsego County

- **Community Gardens:** 0 gardens
- **Educational Gardens:** 2 gardens (100%)
- **Urban Farms:** 0 farms
- **Hosting public/private events:** 1 garden (50%)
- **Educational programming:** 2 gardens (100%)
- **Plans to expand:** 1 garden (50%)
- **Compost activity:** 2 gardens (100%)
- **Donating produce:** 2 gardens (100%)

Gardens included in the 2016 inventory⁶: Greater Plains Garden, Kid Garden at Cooperstown Central School

Other gardens not included in the 2016 inventory: Asbury Gardens Plant a Row for Hunger, Cooperstown Food Pantry Growing Community



Sidney Central School Garden



Cooperstown Kid Garden

QUICK FACTS BY COUNTY

Tioga County

- **Community Gardens:** 3 gardens (60%)
- **Educational Gardens:** 2 garden (40%)
- **Urban Farms:** 0 gardens
- **Hosting public/private events:** 1 garden (20%)
- **Educational programming:** 4 gardens (80%)
- **Plans to expand:** 2 gardens (40%)
- **Compost activity:** 3 gardens (60%)
- **Donating produce:** 3 gardens (60%)

Gardens included in the 2016 inventory⁷: CommonGround Garden, Catholic Charities Community Garden, Owego Community Garden, Spencer Community Garden, Tioga Rural Ministry Garden

Other gardens not included in the 2016 inventory: Food Pantry Garden/Bread of Life, Food Pantry Garden/Open Door Mission, Saint Patrick's Community Garden, Tiger Farm

GARDEN SPOTLIGHT: TIGER FARM, TIOGA CENTER, NY

Tioga Central School District's Tiger Farm is a living learning lab where students can apply classroom lessons and learn where food comes from. The farm was first introduced in the fall of 2016, when three family farms and a local excavator worked together to clear approximately 5 acres, turn it all over, add soil amendments and plant a cover crop. According to Nancy Eckstrom, a community volunteer, "This project wouldn't be possible without the support of our community. Our vision is to work together to engage children in agriculture in a very hands on way to develop an awareness of where good food comes from and the skills to grow their own food." Potatoes that were planted this past spring with the help of over 200 students will be featured on the New York Thursday school menu along with other New York grown foods.



Pumpkins grown at the Tiger Farm



Students plant Potatoes at the Tiger Farm

QUICK FACTS BY COUNTY

Tompkins County

- **Community Gardens:** 3 gardens (43%)
- **Educational Gardens:** 4 gardens (57%)
- **Urban Farms:** 1 farm, also educational
- **Hosting public/private events:** 5 gardens (71%)
- **Educational programming:** 6 gardens (86%)
- **Plans to expand:** 3 gardens (43%)
- **Compost activity:** 5 gardens (71%)
- **Donating produce:** 5 gardens (71%)

Gardens included in the 2016 inventory⁸: Dewitt Middle School Garden, East Shore Community Garden, Groton Community Garden, Groundswell Incubator Farm, Ithaca Children’s Garden, Ithaca Community Gardens/Project Growing Hope, Namaste Montessori Garden

Other gardens not included in the 2016 inventory: Aspen Grove Preschool Garden, Boynton Middle School Garden, Brooktondale Inspirational Gardens (BIG), Cornell Garden Plots East Hill, Dilmun Hill Student Organic Farm, Dryden Community Garden, Dryden Community Garden— Common Field, Inc., Dryden Elementary School Ladybug Garden, EcoVillage FROG Garden, EcoVillage SONG Garden, Floral Ave. Community Garden, Greater Ithaca Activities Center (GIAC) Community Garden, Hospicare Gardens, Ithaca College Community Garden, Lansing Community Garden— Common Field, Inc., SongBird Community Garden, South Hill Elementary School Orchard, South Side Community Center Garden, West Hill Community Garden at Lindermann Creek Apartments, Wood’s Earth Living Classroom Garden, Youth Farm Project

GARDEN SPOTLIGHT: ITHACA CHILDREN’S GARDEN, ITHACA, NY

Ithaca Children's Garden (ICG) has focused on positive youth development since 1997. Their mission is to inspire the next generation of environmental stewards while creating a welcoming space for community members of all ages. Last year ICG served more than 8,000 children in direct programming, with more than 70,000 annual visitors. Children ages two and a half to six, through their Playful Nature Explorers program gain an understanding of the seasons through child-led play. They also run a Teen Urban Farmers program that hires 15 teens every summer to grow, harvest, and sell produce while learning teach\ valuable entrepreneurial skills. The Garden hosts many annual events and festivals, and facilitates professional development for educators and other public gardens. Executive Director Erin Marteau believes the garden’s success comes from a “broad and deep community commitment.”



Ithaca Children’s Garden’s Tadpole Pond



Ithaca Children’s Garden’s Rice Paddy Pond

NOTES

- ¹ Garden information for Broome County gathered from [VINES gardens](#).
- ² Garden information for Chemung County gathered from [Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chemung County](#); Matt Griffin, Food Bank of the Southern Tier.
- ³ Garden information for Chenango County gathered from [Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chenango County](#).
- ⁴ Garden information for Cortland County gathered from [Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cortland County](#); [Sustainable Cortland](#).
- ⁵ Garden information for Delaware County gathered from [Cornell Cooperative Extension of Delaware County](#)
- ⁶ Garden information for Otsego County gathered from [Otsego County Hunger Coalition](#).
- ⁷ Garden information for Tioga County gathered from Barb Neal, [Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tioga County](#); Nancy Eckstrom, Community Volunteer.
- ⁸ Garden information for Tompkins County gathered from [Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County](#)