The Future of Urban Agriculture
Promises & Pitfalls

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Phoenix Gardens-Southern SARE
Who am I??????

• Small Farmer
  • Phoenix Gardens

• Trainer
  • Farmers Markets
  • Farmer Training

• Advocate
  • GFMA
  • Southern SARE
  • SSAWG
  • Georgia Organics
  • Grant Reviewer
  • Balle Fellow
Overview

Urban agriculture has made great strides towards being recognized as a legitimate form of agriculture.
- Increasing yields as production methods improve
- Fulfilling the promise of addressing food deserts
- Spinning off other components of local food systems as movement matures
- Introduction of new technologies
- Identification of emerging markets
Phoenix Gardens
Lawrenceville, GA
The Promises of Urban Agriculture

• Neighborhood Revitalization
• Increased Access to Fresh healthy Food
  o Food insecure areas
  o Enhanced local food systems
• Potential Impacts on Community Health
• Identifying New Market Trends
• Increased Urban-Rural Connections
Backyard Gardeners Network
Lower Ninth Ward, New Orleans

Neighborhood Revitalization
Footprint Farms
Jackson, MS

Neighborhood Revitalization
HABESHA Works
Atlanta, GA

Neighborhood Revitalization
Healthy Eating Classes
Good Samaritan Health Center
Atlanta, GA
Peachdish
Atlanta, GA

TREND: Convenience
Potential Pitfalls

• Gentrification
  o Is urban agriculture sowing the seeds of its own destruction?
  o In some areas, the growth of urban agriculture has led to increasing land values

• Inability to Baseline Urban Agriculture Metrics
  o Has urban agriculture proven itself as a sustainable production system?

• The “Non-Profit” Dilemma
  o Over-reliance on grant funding versus a business oriented approach
Urban Agriculture Metrics

• Have urban farms reached a level of profitability and sustainable operations?
• Does increased access to locally grown food translate into healthier communities?
• Lease vs. own measurements
• What does a successful urban ag operation look like?
Non-Profit Dilemma

• In many cities non-profit organizations have been at the vanguard of the urban agriculture movement

• Some of these organizations have developed financial problems over the long term

• Primarily grant funded operations
Thank You!

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