



VEGGIELUTION

URBAN FARMING PROJECT

Annual Report 2008

While Santa Clara Valley transformed itself into a bustling urban center, a twelve-acre piece of farmland has sat quietly below San Jose's central freeway interchange at Emma Prusch Farm Park.

In April 2008, the Prusch Farm Park Foundation—a nonprofit that guides decisions at Emma Prusch, adopted the Veggielution Urban Farming Project. That month we were given permission to break ground on a quarter-acre pilot plot looking out over the “Back Twelve.”

What started in January 2007 as a grassroots effort to organize organic vegetable production in the backyards of downtown homes has evolved into a community effort to secure land for a large-scale, educational farm.

The first few months at Emma Prusch were hard, but a community formed around Veggielution's new land. Private companies and local foundations provided supplies and money. Elder gardeners provided plants and guidance. Youth from surrounding schools and community volunteers worked to prepare the soil by hand, and then planted it with corn, beans, tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, peppers, watermelons, and sunflowers.

By May, an organic, bio-intensive garden had taken root in a previously vacant field. The harvest surprised us all. Each week produce went to a local soup kitchen, while volunteers enjoyed their fill. For many who participated, it was the first time that they had tasted food grown by their own hands.

It is now February 2009, and while we nurture the soil for future years of productivity, we are laying the groundwork for a community organization that has the capacity to have a greater impact.

We have obtained fiscal sponsorship through the William James Association, which relieves the Emma Prusch Foundation of some responsibility for our project while still allowing for a close collaboration. We have also created a Project Development Team and an Advisory Board, composed of local community leaders, SJSU faculty, and students.



As Veggielution builds a more formal structure, we will be better able to collaborate with other organizations and maximize resources. As we expand, we will form our own 501(c)3 nonprofit.

In the coming months, we will create a proposal explaining our idea for a large scale, educational community farm at Prusch Farm Park. Though there has been no formal request for proposals by park management, it is our goal to be a part of the conversation over the “Back Twelve.”

Our current and future successes are tied to our broad vision and goals: to empower youth, embrace diversity, build community, and create a more sustainable food system in San Jose.

We are a city of long time natives and recent immigrants. We see great strength in the diversity of San Jose, and we see the farm as a way to find common ground. We understand that the energy to make this happen will come from our youth, and the knowledge will come from our elders who know what it is work the land, or how to build a successful organization.

As San Jose envisions how to become a sustainable city, we must recognize urban agriculture is part of the solution to climate change, environmental destruction, food insecurity, and growing poverty.

Every Sunday we eat and work together on our farm and rethink what it means to be from The Silicon Valley. We are imagining the future and remembering that this place used to be called The Valley of Heart's Delight. Our future community farm will not only be a source of fresh, local food. We hope to create a monument to our collective histories and cultures, a place where people reconnect with each other and the land that sustains them.

1,705
Pounds of food produced

400+
Participants

4,360+
Volunteer Hours

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT TEAM

- AMIE FRISCH**
CO-FOUNDER
- MARK ANTHONY MEDEIROS**
CO-FOUNDER
- SANDHYA DITTAKAVI**
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT INTERN
- ANNIE CHANG**
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
- RYAN SMITH**
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
- SEAN P. JONES**
FARMING INTERN
- CHRIS PRUDHOMME**
FARMING INTERN
- ELIZABETH SARIMIENTO**
FARMING / COMMUNITY OUTREACH
- DENNIS LOZANO**
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
- MARCUS ELLIOT-KILGORE**
ADMINISTRATIVE INTERN
- TOM BOWMER**
ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT
- MONICA LISA BENAVIDES**
EDUCATION / COMMUNITY OUTREACH

ADVISORY BOARD

- MICHAEL FALLON**
CENTER FOR SERVICE LEARNING, SJSU
- RACHEL O'MALLEY**
ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES DEPT., SJSU
- SHARON MCCRAY**
PRESIDENT, PRUSCH FOUNDATION
- SARAH GALLARDO**
EDUCATOR, FULL CIRCLE FARM
- LIZ SNYDER**
DIRECTOR, FULL CIRCLE FARM
- CHRISTOPHER LEPE**
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE, DE ANZA
- JIM PETKIEWICZ**
COMMUNITY LINKS INTERNATIONAL
- DENNIS BOLGER**
NATURALIST, PRUSCH FARM PARK
- PAUL MCNAMARA**
SJSU DIVISION OF ADVANCEMENT
- ADRIANA GARCIA-CABRERA**
DIRECTOR, M.A.I.Z.
- MARIO DE LEON**
MACSA, YMCA



FARM OPERATIONS

Every Sunday an average of 20 volunteers work on a variety of tasks which include: starting seeds, planting, weeding, building and turning compost piles, and harvesting. Work is managed by volunteer workday leaders. After 2-3 hours of work, participants share in a potluck lunch, and are encouraged to take home produce. During the summer months last year, we harvested produce twice a week, and also made a weekly delivery to Martha's Kitchen. Currently, we are developing a work schedule for 2009 that will improve on last year's yield, increase the diversity of crops grown, and ensure a more continuous harvest.

Installed 4ft wire fence around pilot plot

Installed automatic drip irrigation system

Double dug 1,950 sq ft of garden beds with people power, mattocks, shovels, and hoes

Built an 8'x4' in ground worm bin

Held 32 Sunday workdays attended by an average of 20 people

Held 16 weekday morning workdays attended by an average of 5 people

Planted 2,350 sq ft of vegetables and flowers

Harvested 1,705 lbs of produce

Volunteers put in a total of 4,360 hours

Hosted San Jose Conservation Corps (8 visits)

Hosted Children's Discovery Museum Summer of Service Green Team (4 visits)

Hosted one Hands On Bay Area work event

Hosted many other field trips and group visits

Participated in the Americorps Bridging Borders Program

ESTIMATED YIELD

CROP YIELDS (LBS)

CORN.....	60	ZUCCHINI.....	250
POLE BEANS.....	25	CUCUMBERS.....	250
TOMATOES.....	950	WATERMELON.....	60
JALAPENO PEPPERS.....	80	SUNFLOWER SEEDS.....	5
BELL PEPPERS.....	25	TOTAL.....	1705 LBS

DISTRIBUTION

MARTHA'S KITCHEN.....	700 LBS
SAN JOSE STATE CAMPUS ORGS.....	160 LBS
CHAM.....	20 LBS
VEGGIELUTION VOLUNTEERS.....	825 LBS

Financial Summary 2008

INCOME

DONATIONS FROM ORGANIZATIONS	\$10,250
GCRCD	\$7,500
SILICON VALLEY LAND CONSERVANCY	\$500
KIWANIS CLUB OF SAN JOSE	\$250
EMMA PRUSCH FOUNDATION	\$2,000
INDIVIDUAL DONORS	\$410
IN KIND DONATIONS	\$1,600

CASH INCOME	\$10,660
TOTAL INCOME	\$12,260

EXPENDITURES

SUPPLIES	\$3,155.90
STAFF	\$5,800.00

TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$8,955.90
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BALANCE	\$1,704.10
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CREATING THE EAST SIDE COMMUNITY FARM

Vision and Strategy

We will establish a large-scale community farm that will empower youth, build community, and help create a sustainable food system in San Jose, California

ADDRESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS The farm will address issues of food access, community space, youth development, and environmental and nutrition education. It will directly serve those on the community garden waiting list, immigrants who feel disconnected from their agricultural heritage, and first-time gardeners who want to connect with the land. We will provide an opportunity for physical activity, social interaction, and education. It will be San Jose's first community farm demonstrating sustainable agriculture and a place for the community to congregate and celebrate our rich cultural heritage.

CREATING A STRUCTURE We see the farm as a potential collaboration between the City of San Jose, the Prusch Farm Park Foundation, San Jose State, area elementary and high schools, and a variety of community partners. Veggielution will create a 501(c)3 nonprofit and hire staff to manage farming, an educational program, and community involvement. However, we hope to empower the San Jose community to take ownership. Many leadership positions will be created for volunteers, and a community input process will evolve. Our Advisory Board will continue to grow to include youth, faculty, and representatives of community organizations.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM Our first goal is to create a high school youth program which draws from area schools. Participants will learn diverse skills as they help to operate the farm. They will also receive training in leadership, communication, cultural empowerment, environmental and social issues. Internship opportunities will be available to university students to help run various aspects of the organization, while workshops will be developed for adult participants. Trainings can be developed to give teachers and other community leaders the skills they need to start new projects. All the programming will encourage intergenerational learning.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT Community work days will be structured to involve a diverse community of all age groups. Participants will receive fresh produce and develop relationships with others in the community. Staff will facilitate group decision-making with volunteers, including experienced elder gardeners, to ensure that the farm produces culturally relevant foods and develops programs with broad public interest. A community space will be incorporated into the farm for seasonal and cultural celebrations, performances, workshops, and special events.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY The farm will use college-age interns, a high school youth program, and community involvement to meet its labor needs. Produce will be distributed as progressively as possible while selling a portion to hire staff and buy supplies. Distribution strategies will include donations, the sale of CSA shares on a sliding pay scale, an onsite

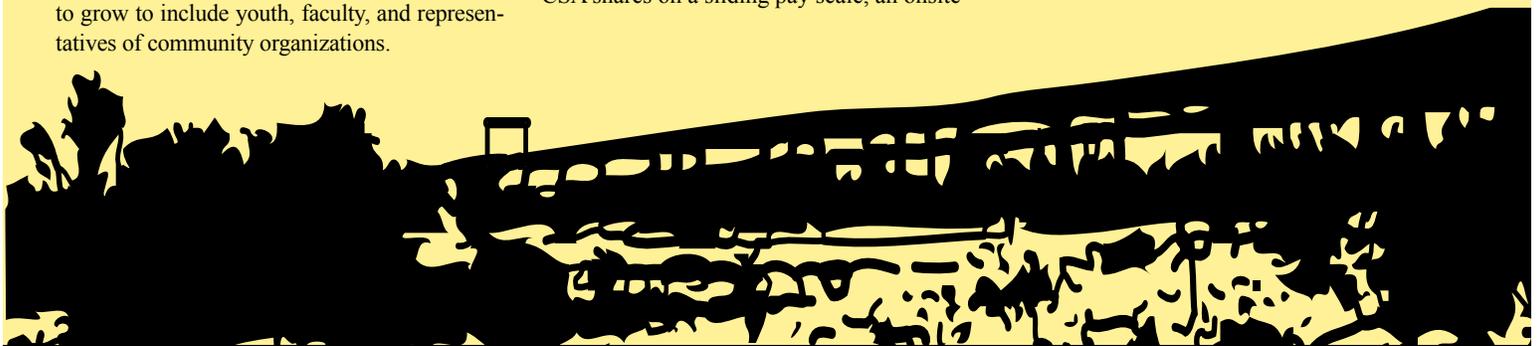


Prusch Farm Park's "Back Twelve" is our preferred location, however we are prepared to consider other sites. This land is already slated for agricultural use.

farmstand, and sales of produce to local restaurants. Eventually, value-added products such as tomato sauce can be produced and marketed locally. However, grantwriting and fundraising will continue to play an important role.

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE The farm will be managed using best practice organic farming methods. Soil fertility will be maintained through crop rotations, cover cropping, composting, and vermiculture. A hedgerow of natives, fruit trees, herbs and other beneficial plants will be established around the perimeter to create a habitat for beneficial wildlife. Inter-cropping, drip irrigation, and integrated pest management will be used. We recognize the value of the agricultural heritage of San Jose's diverse community. A farm manager will be responsible for integrating the cultural knowledge of experienced gardeners with a sustainable farm management plan.

MULTIPLE SITES We hope to expand into multiple sites depending on the amount of land we obtain, and facilitate the creation of similar projects to be run by other organizations.



Veggielution empowers youth and adults from diverse backgrounds to create a sustainable food system in San Jose. Our urban farm engages the community by providing access to healthy and local food, creating youth leadership opportunities, and developing creative solutions to social and environmental justice issues.

The Veggielution Community

Our new Fiscal Sponsor:

WILLIAM JAMES ASSOCIATION

Based in Santa Cruz, The William James Association promotes work in the arts, environment, education, and community development. It is a non-profit community service corporation operating under Section 501(c)3 of the IRS tax code. Through its Fiscal Sponsorship Program, the Association assists individuals and community organizations consistent with its service mission by providing administrative support, tax-exempt status, and fiscal sponsorship. The purpose of the William James Association Sponsorship Program is twofold:

- 1) Provide managerial support and guidance to individuals and organizations so that they may produce temporary projects or begin to develop as ongoing organizations.
- 2) Ensure funding agencies and contributors that funds are well-managed, spent according to their guidelines, and that proposed services are delivered.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

PARTICIPATE IN OUR WEEKLY WORKDAYS Our weekly Sunday workdays will continue throughout the year. See our website for directions and times. This is the best opportunity to experience Veggielution. Bring your family and your friends to participate in farm work and share in a communal potluck lunch.

JOIN OUR ADVISORY BOARD We are currently looking for experienced community leaders to join our Advisory Board. The Board will help guide the direction of our project and develop our community farm proposal. If you are affiliated with a local organization, have experience in community development, public health, sustainable agriculture or similar areas, we would love to meet you.

DONATE MONEY AND SUPPLIES Are you part of a local funding organization? Can your business provide in-kind donations of services and supplies? Are you an individual interested in giving a one time donation? If so, please contact us.

BECOME A PARTNER ORGANIZATION We seek to work with existing community organizations and youth programs in developing our vision. Let's schedule a meeting and talk about collaboration.

Visit our website:

www.veggielution.org

E-mail us at:

info@veggielution.org



"Knowledge about how to produce healthy food is something that everyone deserves access to. I think that Veggielution is helping to reclaim some of that power and put it back where it should be-- in our own hands. A seed will grow for anyone. It isn't concerned about your race, how much education you have, or how much money is in your wallet."

- Roxie Rice, 22



"It's awesome and a lot of fun. I had a great time. It was a good learning experience and it's something that I think is going to be good for San Jose. I hope it gets bigger."

- Travis Abate, 14



"Veggielution helps members of our community work together towards a common goal. In a society largely based on instant gratification, gardening teaches us the value of caring and waiting for something that keep us, our families and communities healthy."

- Monica Lisa-Benavides, 26



"For all these volunteers, it's not only about the quantity of food, but how we can learn from this hands on experience. Maybe some people will take this to a larger level, planting in their own homes or educating others."

- Elizabeth Sarimiento, 40



THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR SUPPORTERS AND PARTNERS

Individual Donors: Jessica Elliot, Michael Fallon, Maureen Frisch, Susan and John Owicki, Kristina Vicijan, Milovan Milutin, Filipe Medeiros, Gina Serpa

SUPPORTIVE / AFFILIATED COMMUNITY GROUPS

Emma Prusch Farm Park, Prusch Farm Park Foundation, Guadalupe-Coyote Resource Conservation District, Children's Discovery Museum Youth Programs, Silicon Valley Land Conservancy, The Health Trust

San Jose State University: Center for Community Learning and Leadership; Cesar Chavez Community Action Center; Departments of En-

vironmental Studies, Sociology, and Nutrition.

PARTICIPATING STUDENTS FROM THESE SCHOOLS

McKinley Elementary; Overfelt High School; Independence High School; Bellarmine College Preparatory; San Jose High Academy; De Anza Community College; Evergreen Community College; San Jose State University; Santa Clara University

*All our dedicated volunteers,
who are too many to name*

*The many organizations that
we hope to work with in the
future and are currently de-
veloping relationships with*

*Our friends at other Bay Area
non-profit farms*

