

# BLOOMING POSSIBILITIES

Securing a Sanctuary for Liberation,  
Health, Healing, Food, and Justice





# REFLECTIONS ON 2021

In the beginning of 2021, Urban Tilth found itself in the midst of a global pandemic, struggling with statewide drought conditions, summers of choking wildfires smoke, and a community that has become more distant and disconnected than ever. Sitting here at the end of 2021, Urban Tilth is proud of our decision not to close down our work, but to double down on our efforts and keep our doors, community engagement, food production, food distribution, and classroom spaces open and running for the community here in Richmond, CA. At the end of 2021, Urban Tilth is proud to say that we are still here, and we are stronger than ever!

Our growth during 2021 is most visible in one of Urban Tilth's most cherished statistical indicators, food distribution! In 2021 Urban Tilth distributed an organizational record **128,239 lbs of food** to local community members in Richmond, San Pablo and the greater East Bay! This food distribution was accomplished through our paid Community Supported Agriculture Food Box Programs (Farm to Table - feeding over 200 families each week), our Free Food Box Program (Food For All - feeding another 200+ families each week), and our Free Farm Stand pop-ups in central Richmond, North Richmond, and at Richmond High School that separately provided free, fresh, organically grown produce to over 3,000 Richmond and San Pablo Families.

We not only set organizational records in food distribution in 2021, we also nearly doubled our food production from farms and gardens right here in Richmond! Approximately 17% of the total food that was distributed during 2021 was grown on Richmond soil by our production farmers at the North Richmond Farm, school gardeners at Richmond High School, and Verde K-8





## REFLECTIONS ON 2021

Partnership Gardens, along with our Community Garden and Edible Forest staff on the Richmond Greenway. Total production from these sites rose from 11,038 lbs in 2020, to **21,876 lbs of food in 2021 (a 98% increase in one year)!** Not to mention by the end of 2021, Urban Tilth purchased the North Richmond Farm, setting the scene for continued local food production for generations to come.

Urban Tilth programs are committed to cultivating and stewarding not only food in Richmond and San Pablo CA, but also the creeks, parks, and community spaces that create the heart of our city. During 2021 our Watershed Restoration Team, Greenway Gardens Team, along with **2,289 community volunteers removed over 400 cubic yards of illegally dumped trash** from our streets, creeks, parks, and playgrounds in Central and North Richmond. Once this trash was removed, Urban Tilth **planted over 677 native pollinator plants** over a span of **39 community volunteer** events that replaced trash with beauty and gardens growing healthy food for our local people, and pollinators to enjoy.

Equally important to the stewardship of creeks, land and community resources is the cultivation of resources and knowledge within our community members themselves. During 2021 Urban Tilth's Education teams hosted over **209 workshops and garden education classes**, and **engaged over 1358 students** from West Contra Costa Unified School District at Verde K-8 school, Lincoln Elementary, and Richmond High School.

In summary, 2021 showcased Urban Tilth's ability to continue to provide critical resources and solutions for the issues of our time. We are deeply indebted to the thousands of individual donors, foundations, and government agencies that SEE this work and provide us with the resources to continue making Richmond the city of Pride and Purpose.

Adam Boisvert  
Deputy Director,  
Urban Tilth





# OUR IMPACT

## FOOD PRODUCTION



### Total Food Distributed

**128,239 lbs**

up from 62,677 lbs

### Total LBS of Food Production

**21,876 lbs**

up from 10,725 lbs

(17% of total food distributed)

### Total CSA Boxes Delivered

**15,583**

up from 11,429

Farm To Table Program 7,700 up from 6,478

Farmers to Families Program 7,883 up from 4,951

*"I am a person with a disability and the food from Urban Tilth allows me to eat organic fresh fruit and vegetables at a price I can afford. Plus during this pandemic, the CSA's delivery service has allowed me to stay safe. Lastly, I love UT because, besides the great fruits and veggies, the people are so nice! I look forward to my bag of food every two weeks and my new friends who deliver it!" - Kenny*



# OUR IMPACT PARTICIPANTS

*"I enjoyed having the opportunity to learn more about environmental science, social justice, and to discuss critical issues as a group. It has benefited me in a way that I can apply this knowledge into my communities and I'm inspired to protect the waters." - Boudia B.*

**2,289** Community Volunteers and Participants

**1358** WCCUSD Students Engaged (up from 696)

**209** Workshops and Garden Education Classes (up from 93)

**51** Cooking Classes Taught (up from 46)

**39** Volunteer Days, Community Cleanups and Special Events





# OUR IMPACT

## BEAUTIFICATION

*"This program has definitely helped me learn more about native plants, how to identify them and the role they play in creeks and natural spaces, as well as how to propagate them. I also appreciate the educational aspect of taking indigenous people into consideration in the work of restoration and connection to the environment." - Jessi B.*

**350** of Illegal Dumping  
CUBIC YARDS Removed From  
Community Spaces

**677** Native and Pollinator  
Plants Planted

**801** Eggs laid!  
Rest in Power Ginger,  
Peppermint, and Bubbles



and we grew  
**HELLA  
FLOWERS!**





# WE BOUGHT THE FARM!



**Urban Tilth has always believed that Nature, in all of its humbling awe, is not only found in remote Regional, State and National Parks, but exists everywhere beneath our feet.**

Even in the most disinvested urban spaces, our Earth and its potential for stunning, complex interconnected life is churning just below the surface.

In urban spaces, we are too often disconnected from the cycles, seasons and beautiful rhythms of our planet. As we face unparalleled natural disasters, the staggering realities of climate change, an unprecedented mental health crisis, and preventable diet related disease; **our communities need, more than ever, spaces to reconnect and fall back into rhythm with each other and life on our planet.**

The North Richmond Farm with its growing orchard, sustainably managed crop rows, native and pollinator hedgerows and bioretention areas, is a rare gem in the San Francisco Bay Area. This 3-acre oasis has been wrestled back from the merciless advancement of profit driven development. At the North Richmond Farm we are creating a sanctuary where community members who normally strive to survive under the crush of urban life can take a moment to remember our full selves, and reconnect to the practice of being in relationship to each other and in service of our Earth.

After a 2 year long community design process we created a vision to develop the farm into a neighborhood anchor that seeds healing, connection, self-determination, and prosperity for our entire community by serving as the heart of resident-led organizing and opportunity in North Richmond.





## Developing the farm will:

- **Enable Urban Tilth to scale up our impact by doubling our healthy food production.**
- **Become the first location in North Richmond where residents can access fresh produce 7 days a week.**
- **Create more, life affirming jobs for local residents.**
- **Provide the community with a vibrant cultural venue for events, class visits, and recreational activities.**
- **Build a community meeting room for residents to use to organize, build power, and take collective action.**
- **Offer neighbors a thriving, safe, green space immersed in the rich history of this land and the people and cultures who have shaped the land.**
- **And neighbors can find sanctuary in a thriving, safe green, inspiring community space.**

During the successful launch of our Capital Campaign, Urban Tilth raised the funds needed to start the journey to build the vision of the North Richmond Farm and purchase the land so that this project is no longer subject to the ebbs and flows of politics or the speculative land market, on September 14, 2021 the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the sale of 323 Brookside Drive to Urban Tilth. The one condition of the sale was that we agree to steward the land as an urban farm and learning center serving the West County community in perpetuity. In 2014, when Navina Khanna, our then Board President, and

I signed the lease for the land located at 323 Brookside Drive that we now belovedly call the North Richmond Farm, we could have never imagined that 7 years later that new relationship with land would become permanent.

For us “owning” the land has given us the profound opportunity to become long term stewards of a place where we live, love and will create the stories that truly feed our lives. Our dream is to create a space that will inspire the next generation of community stewards, and civic leaders that will continue this work of cultivating community. As we look from this vantage point at the road ahead we are profoundly grateful for the rare opportunity to share the depth and breadth of this responsibility with our neighbors, families and friends who are the inspiring and proud residents North Richmond, Richmond and San Pablo. It is here, in these neighborhoods, where we humbly hope to continue to create an opportunity for community members to have a multigenerational love affair with this land.

**Doria Robinson,**  
**Executive Director, Urban Tilth**





# 2021 FINANCIALS

 **TOTAL INCOME** \$2,502,274

 **TOTAL EXPENSES** \$2,302,751

Salaries & Benefits	\$1,685,128	75%
Program Expenses	\$280,781	12%
Operating Expenses	\$304,154	13%

 **NET OPERATING INCOME** \$199,523





# THANK YOU OUR DONORS

Urban Tilth is deeply grateful to all of our funders who believe in the work we do and make it possible for us to continue to serve our community.

It is of the utmost importance to give thanks, especially to those funders who contributed to the early seed fund: **The Chorus Foundation, the Patterson Foundation, the Hellman Family Foundation, Katayl Foundation.**

Because of this significant investment and unwavering partnership that made way for us to purchase the North Richmond Farm!

We also want to say a special thank you to ALL those funders who went above and beyond and showed up for us in ways philanthropy rarely does. Thank you to all those whose names are bolded.

Amazon Smile, Benevity, Blackbaud Giving Fund, Bridgebuilders Foundation, Bright Funds Foundation, **California Endowment,** Chamberlin Family Foundation,

**Chorus Foundation, City of Albany,** City of Richmond, Wildcat Mitigation Project, Disney Company Employee Matching Fund, Fel Family Foundation, **Fidelity Charitable,** Foundation for Sustainability and Innovation, **Climate Justice Alliance, Hellman Family Foundation,** Horizons Foundation, Horner Foundation, Impact Assets, **Justice Justice Foundation,** Just Transition Fund (EBCF), **Kataly Foundation,** Marin Community Foundation, **Manzanita Foundation,** Mechanics Bank, **Needlegrass Fund, Rachel's Network,** RSF Social Finance, Blackie Foundation, Small Planet Fund, **San Francisco Foundation, Schwab Charitable, Silicon Valley Community Foundation,** Slow Money - Northern California, **Sunlight Giving,** The Henry E. & Mary R Anderson Family Foundation, **USDA, Vanguard Charitable, Verizon, and Windward Fund/ Fund to Build Grassroots Power.**

We also want to deeply thank the over 800 **individual donors and small family foundations** who generously made it possible for Urban Tilth to feed hundreds of families in need and offer a little comfort during this year of upheaval.

## We could not do this work without your support. THANK YOU!