

Viet Village Urban Farm

New Orleans, Louisiana, U.S.A.

The Viet Village Urban Farm project represents an effort to reestablish the tradition of local farming in this community after Hurricane Katrina. New Orleans East was one of the areas most damaged by the storms of 2005. In response to the devastation, the community organized around the idea of creating an urban farm and market at the center of their community. The farm, located on 28-acres in the heart of the community, will be a combination of small-plot gardening for family consumption, larger commercial plots focused on providing food for local restaurants and grocery stores in New Orleans, and a livestock area for raising chickens and goats in the traditional Vietnamese way.

The proposed market on the site will provide a location for the individual farmers to supplement their income as well as serve as a central meeting space for the larger Vietnamese community along the Gulf Coast. Based on the history of the markets in the area before Katrina, as many as 3,000 people are expected to come to the site for a Saturday market, perhaps more on traditional festival days. Specialty vegetables and foods used in Vietnamese cuisine will be sold at the market. Local Vietnamese restaurants will have a space to sell prepared food during market days as well.

Another goal of the project is to bring together different generations within the local community through the shared endeavor of the farm. The idea is to pass down traditional Vietnamese farming skills and practices. As such, it's also important that the farm acts as a community center, and sports and playgrounds are proposed for the site. The community sees this project as the centerpiece for rebuilding efforts in the New Orleans East.

The community established a set of specific goals for the environmental health of the farm and the surrounding community:

- Establish a Certified Organic farming practice that includes integrated pest management, composting, crop rotation, and cover cropping among other organic practices
- Become a model for low-tech sustainable site development in the New Orleans area through the use of bio-filtration of water resources and alternative energy sources such as wind, and passive and active solar power
- Establish relationships with area restaurants and grocery stores to provide locally grown produce as a part of the localvore food movement
- Create an economic and cultural resource for the community
- Create a cultural resource for Vietnamese-Americans along the Gulf Coast

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Project Resources

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