

Planting Justice at the City Tree Nursery

Planting Justice (PJ) and Three Sisters Gardens (TSG) are partnering with the City of Sacramento to transform the former City Tree Nursery into what will become a nationally significant center for urban agriculture and social entrepreneurship, youth mentorship, and farmer training. The City-owned 5-acre site will become a vegetable/herb/flower farm led by Three Sisters Gardens, and an organic production nursery led by Planting Justice. Together, this coalition will create increased access to living-wage green jobs, youth employment opportunities, affordable organic produce, and a variety of educational opportunities on organic farming, sustainability, culinary arts, and health.

In July 2020, the City of Sacramento and PJ executed an initial lease for three acres of the site. In August 2021, \$2 million in State funding was announced to fund the construction and early operation of this project, with funding expected to become available in fall 2021. The farm and production nursery are anticipated to begin constructed in early 2022, with first harvests of organic produce expected in summer 2022.

Primary Goals and Objectives:

1) Production Nursery and Kitchen

PJ will create a production nursery that provides living-wage and benefitted jobs for the community, generates revenue needed to support itself long-term, and creates community access to nutrient-dense and climate-resilient trees, shrubs, vegetables, herbs, flowers, and native plants. At full buildout, the Nursery will include roughly 1.2 acres of outdoor field production, and 7,000 sq. ft. of indoor greenhouse production, producing 10,000+ new organic trees every year. An onsite commercial kitchen will provide space for local farmers, crafts-makers and artisans to produce value-added products such as Sacramento-made soaps, jam, honey, and more.

2) Organic Farm: Food as Medicine

TSG will utilize one acre of the site to grow nutrient dense, medicinal vegetables and herbs, including native foods, that will be distributed to restaurants and community-supported agriculture (CSA) members, as well as to low-income elders, adults, and youth for free or on a sliding scale. Through youth internships, community workshops, and demonstration organic gardens, TSG promotes health and self-reliance by teaching our community how to grow, harvest, prepare and distribute healthy organic nutrient vegetables locally. These activities are grounded in traditional Native American values of respecting Mother Earth and all living things.

3) Life-Enriching Educational Programming

Farmer-Educators at Planting Justice and Three Sisters Gardens will offer regular educational programming that gives participants life-long skill sets for growing, sourcing, cooking, and sharing good food, including employment and life-skills related to ecological design, farming, landscaping, plant propagation, horticulture, backyard kitchen gardens, irrigation, water harvesting, shipping and retail, customer service, nutrition, culinary arts, and more. The facilities are envisioned to be made available to other local organizations for similar educational opportunities.