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The Bird Sankofa News

**Issue 01
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Market launches Veggie Power Dollars

Most of us need a little encouragement to ensure that we eat the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) recommended servings of 5 fruits and vegetables every day. The laundry list of barriers to getting that minimum can include a lack of time, the rising cost of fresh produce, access and transportation issues, a lack of cooking and food preparation knowledge, and of course our own taste preferences. Shopping at the Sankofa Farmers Market is a perfect way to get more fruits and vegetables into your diet. Market produce is seasonal and fresh, and shoppers can pick up cooking ideas from vendors, market staff, and other shoppers. Recipes and tastings during cooking demonstrations at the Market are held every second Saturday of the month and provide a great opportunity to learn new ways to spice up your kitchen routine.

Some barriers that affect consumption of fruits and vegetables include accessibility and affordability. These obstacles are often more pronounced for low-income people who live in segregated neighborhoods without stores that sell fresh foods. Furthermore, research has shown that people who live in these areas experience high rates of diet-related chronic diseases such as hypertension,

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Sankofa Youth Garden Project Brings Life to the Frederick Douglass Garden at KIPP Renaissance High School

Since March 2011, the Sankofa Youth Garden Project has been working with students at KIPP Renaissance High School at Frederick Douglass to build a vegetable, herb, and flower garden next to the school gymnasium. Former Frederick Douglass High School students and staff have noted the abundance of watermelons and vegetables that grew in the area before the Hurricane Katrina disaster. Named the Frederick Douglass Garden, the 2500 square foot space at the corner of Pauline and North Rampart Streets has had a resurgence of life. With added fresh compost, it is blossoming this semester with planted cabbage, radish, carrot, parsley, different varieties of mustard greens, beets, peas, basil, dill, and many other vegetables, herbs, and flowers.

The mission of the Youth Garden Project is to increase an appreciation of healthy food in children in New Orleans. Renaissance students are working with the Project to learn about gardening and the nutritional benefits of fresh

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Veggie Power Dollars

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diabetes, and obesity. On December 10, 2011 Sankofa Community Development Corporation (CDC) will launch the Veggie Power Dollars program to address these barriers and help provide improved access and affordability of fresh food for low-income community members who shop at the Market.

Veggie Power Dollars is a match incentive program for Market customers who receive SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits, commonly known as food stamps. Patrons who use their SNAP benefit cards will receive up to \$10 in matching fruit and vegetable tokens, named 'Sankofa Veggie Dollars' to purchase produce at the Market. Veggie Power Dollars is funded by the Fernandina Foundation and Healthy Heart Community Prevention Project. Sankofa CDC was also awarded a Farmers Market Promotion Program grant from the USDA in September 2010 to help promote the Market to SNAP benefit customers.

The goal of the Veggie Power Dollars program is to increase community wide fruit and vegetable consumption, in addition to awareness about the role of healthy diets in chronic disease prevention. The matching fruit and vegetable tokens will be accompanied by fun activities open to all Market shoppers. There will be nutritional and budget-friendly cooking workshops, health screenings, and a variety of wellness activities for children and families.



The Garden

A poem by Bria M. Johnson

I love the summer when the green grass grows,

And the winter when the trees are naked and froze,

The spring when colorful flowers blossom and bloom,

And autumn when you never thought tree leaf colors change so soon.

I love the middle of June when exotic color flowers poke out the dark soil,

Or in the middle of October when there are so many oranges and reds, it has to make you feel royal,

*Or in December when the only thing keeping the garden warm is the bare sun,
Or in May when colorful lilies shout, after April showers rung.*

*But, no matter what season it is, or what you harvest,
You will always feel a special feeling in the garden.*



Bria M. Johnson is a 10th Grade student at KIPP Renaissance High School working with the Sankofa Youth Garden Project.



Calvin Alexander of Cal's Crops with a Market customer.

The Sankofa Farmers Market Celebrates One Year!

The Sankofa Farmers Market transitioned from a monthly marketplace to a producer-only farmers market in November 2010. We celebrate our one year anniversary as a farmers market with a community of vendors and customers who continue to enjoy gathering together each Saturday. The Market serves as a community anchor to support local farmers and fishers, provide access to fresh foods, stimulate economic activity, and empower the community with information about the health benefits of consuming vegetables and fruits. The fall season brings a variety of cool weather produce such as greens, broccoli, beets, squash, carrots, lettuce, citrus, and more. The Market also continues to offer bread, creole cream cheese, eggs, Louisiana rice, milk, plants, shrimp, tofu, and a variety of prepared foods. Customers can purchase food through a market token system with their SNAP benefit and credit/debit cards. All vendors accept cash in addition to the market tokens. Shopping at the market can also be joined with family-oriented activities, including children's culinary classes, art workshops, and scavenger hunts.



Sankofa Farmers Market

3500 St. Claude Ave
EVERY SATURDAY 10AM-2PM
sankofafarmersmarket.org

Fruits • Vegetables • Seafood • Milk • Tofu • Bread • Herbs • Eggs • Baked Goods • Barbeque • Prepared Foods



Shanae Stovall, a KIPP Renaissance 9th grade student works in the Frederick Douglass Garden.

Sankofa Youth Garden Project Brings Life

produce. They also explore the process of growing food to critically think about larger issues of social inequities. The Renaissance students investigate gardens as places to not only grow food, but to also delve into themselves as a part of community and appreciate the attention required for living organisms to survive.

The Renaissance students sell a mix of



herbs and flowers grown in the Frederick Douglass Garden at the Sankofa Farmers Market every 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month. The new vegetable crops currently growing will join the herbs and flowers at the students' booth during January 2011. Through their role as Market vendors, the Renaissance students are also learning various financial literacy tools, marketing skills to promote their products to customers, and information on how to save their profits in a credit union account.

Two local universities are in partnership with Sankofa CDC to work on the Project and help bring new life to the Frederick Douglass Garden. Every Tuesday during the last class period of the school day, a team of Sankofa CDC staff, Renaissance students, and Xavier

University Honors Speech Communications students work together in the garden. They plant, harvest, maintain compost, create ceramic artwork for the garden, and discuss issues centered around food and nutrition. A group of student volunteers from the Tulane University Hillel Group are also working with the team to build a mixed herb garden on the opposite side of the school gymnasium.

In addition to volunteer support, Sankofa CDC has received donated seeds and plants from Harold's Plants, Edible School Yard, and Xavier University Center for Student Leadership and Service. The Frederick Douglass Garden creates additional outdoor classroom space for students and supports beautification efforts of KIPP Renaissance High School. Community members are welcome to come and work with us or just pass by to see all of the new sprouting plants!

Culinary Corner

Tips and Ideas for your culinary needs

Cleaning Greens and Salad Mix: To ensure that you remove all of the sand from your field fresh market greens or salad mix, submerge them in a bowl of cold water. Gently stir the greens in the water to dislodge any sand and grit from the leaves. The sand will sink to the bottom of the bowl. Remove the greens and drain them in a colander or salad spinner.

Storing and Freezing Fresh Shrimp: Store shrimp, wrapped in ice in a covered container, in the coldest part of the refrigerator. Replace the ice as it melts and drain off the water. For best quality, cook fresh shrimp within one to two days of purchase. Freeze fresh shrimp in its raw state with the shell on, and completely submerge it in water. This prevents freezer burn and drying out, and retains the flavor and texture. Use a hard container that will hold water without puncturing. Frozen raw shrimp maintains quality for approximately 6-7 months.

Simple Market Sauté: Need a quick way to use the remaining vegetables in your produce drawer before the next Sankofa Farmers Market? Make a simple vegetable medley sauté with garlic, olive oil and your choice of seasonings and spices. Serve the vegetables over flavorful and nutritious Louisiana rice and top with homemade dressing. Vegetables, salad dressing, and whole grain rice are all locally grown and available at the Market.

Q&A: Foods to Fight the Flu

Q: With flu season quickly approaching, how can I stay healthy and avoid getting sick?

As we welcome the seasonal change from summer to fall, it can also mean increased risk of catching the cold and flu. Essential rules to flu prevention beyond immunization include washing your hands, drinking water, and getting plenty of rest. However the role of a nutritious diet to build a healthy immune system is often overlooked as key to avoiding the severity of these seasonal illnesses. The American Dietetic Association states that nutrition profoundly affects an individual's ability to fight seasonal flu and colds. Lean proteins such as seafood, tofu, and low-fat dairy products are important to strengthen the body's immune system. Consumption of a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables, especially those high in vitamin C such as kale, sweet peppers, and citrus is also beneficial and helps boost resistance to the cold and flu illness. Additionally, physical activity also promotes healthy immune function. Walk or ride your bike for exercise and eat fresh local foods as options for preventative measures, and enjoy the new season illness-free.





Upcoming Events

To submit your events, email Brianna.SankofaCDC@gmail.com by the 25th of each month.

Second Saturday at the Sankofa Farmers Market

Saturday, November 12 - 10am - 2pm

One year anniversary of Sankofa Farmers Market! There will be live music from Coup de Fire (11am - 1pm), free health screenings with the LSU School of Medicine, a cooking demo with Emelia Clement of the LSU Ag Center, and a children's market scavenger hunt.

Herb Garden Build at the Frederick Douglass Garden

Saturday, November 19 - 11am - 2pm

Help students build an herb garden at the Frederick Douglass Garden, KIPP Renaissance High School, 3820 Rampart Street. Bring water and gloves, wear closed toed shoes, and get ready for garden building fun! Open to the public for all ages!

Open Garden Day at the Frederick Douglass Garden

Saturday, November 26 - 10am - 3pm

Open Garden Day at the Frederick Douglass Garden, KIPP Renaissance High School, 3820 Rampart Street. Open to the public for all ages! Bring your working clothes and help out or simply stop by and enjoy the growing garden!



Customers shop for vegetables at the Sankofa Farmers Market.

What is the Meaning of Sankofa?

Sankofa Community Development Corporation (CDC) gets its name from the Akan language of Ghana. Sankofa translates literally to SAN (return), KO (go), FA (look, seek and take). In the Akan culture, Sankofa represents the importance of respecting the wisdom of the past while planning and working for the future.

Sankofa CDC honors the agricultural roots of the Ninth Ward while working to improve health, economic development, and community capacity in the area.

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