



London Breed, Mayor
Philip A. Ginsburg, General Manager

Date: February 5, 2019
To: PROSAC
From: Mei Ling Hui, Community Gardens and Urban Ag Program Manager
Will Lyons, Alemany Farm Site Coordinator
Subject: Alemany Farm and Urban Agriculture Program Updates

Agenda Wording

Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture program update. (Discussion) The Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture program staff will provide a report on key program-wide outcomes, with a focus on Alemany Farm activities.

Strategic Plan

Strategy 2: Inspire Play: Promote active living, well-being and community for San Francisco's diverse and growing population

Objective 2.3 Work with partners and neighborhood groups to activate parks through organized events, activities, and unstructured play

c) Increase opportunities for urban farming and community gardening

Background

In 2004, the Recreation and Park Department assumed direct management of community gardens on Public Land that had been overseen by the San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners. Since that time, RPD has increased the number of gardens and services provided to gardens. RPD now supports and manages a program of 42 community gardens throughout San Francisco, comprising a total land area of over 9 acres, with 1155 plots available.

Program restructure

In Autumn of 2016, the Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture Program was restructured to be housed within the Policy and Public Affairs Division. Our priorities in 2017-2018 focused on improving site conditions, increasing public access and engagement, and developing program efficiencies.





General Program Statistics

- 42 community garden locations
- 1155 plots (8% increase from previous fiscal year)
- 3 full time and 2 part time program staff
 - Mei Ling Hui, Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture Program Manager
 - Will Lyons, Alemany Farm Site Coordinator
 - New Education and Development Coordinator (start date 2/23/19)
 - Jenn Yee, Community Garden Assistant (part-time)
 - Michiyo Toya, Community Garden Assistant (part time)

Garden Improvements

- \$404K invested in site repairs and capital improvements
- Two gardens were fully rebuilt: Corona Heights Community Garden and Page Street Community Garden.
- 20 garden (48%) received infrastructure repairs; repair work focused on addressing safety concerns and increasing social engagement
- Staff performed reengagement at three garden sites to increase site use and community cohesion: Brooks Park Community garden, La Grande Community Garden, and Palega Community Garden

New Gardens

- Two new gardens opened – In Chan Kaajal Community Garden and Geneva Community Garden
- \$1.6M Capital investment to open Geneva Community Garden

New and Enhanced Programs

- Volunteer Garden workdays
 - RPD staff supported 5,500 individuals in participating in 416 volunteer workday projects in community garden that provided a total of 16,831 hours of service to the Community Garden Program.
 - Per independent sector in the State of California, value of a volunteer hour is \$29.09. At \$489,613 the value of this volunteer service is almost double the annual baseline program budget.
- Youth Jobs Skills Development: 25 paid youth green jobs skills program participants from Student Conservation Association and MYEEP provided 2,804 hours of service learning to RPD gardens sites. Youth workers built a dry stream bed for an ephemeral creek, a compost management information kiosk, gopher-proofed garden beds, fixed pathways and trail steps.
- Garden Resource Days: 271 urban gardeners obtained free materials and educational opportunities during six pop-up events. San Francisco residents obtained a total of 71 yards of compost donated by Recology, 28 yards of mulch, and 173 veggie and pollinator plant starts. RPD additionally provided a tool care station, where participants learned how to maintain their garden tools to increase the tools' useful life.
- Workshops: Newly implemented workshop series at community garden sites served 209 urban gardeners were educated through 16 workshops on topics such as compost management, fruit tree pruning and grafting, and repairing garden features.
- 120 San Franciscan students aged 8-13 participated in Urban Youth Farm Camp summer 2017 and 2018.
- Alemany Farm grew 26K pounds of fresh produce that was provided to community members at no-cost at the end of each workday, during you-pick harvest days, and through two neighborhood pantries.
- 23 garden sites received weekly curbside green-waste removal from Recology this year. This new program service improved program efficiencies by annually saving 1196 staffing hours needed to properly dispose of green waste.

Policy

- Developed guidance policy for POPOS community garden sites. POPOS are privately owned public open spaces that are a development requirement from the 1985 Downtown Plan.
- Supported SFDPH Agriculture Commissioner's Beekeeping workgroup.
- Food Security Task Force, Urban Agriculture representative. Setting up Alemany Farm as a "workfare" site to provide volunteer opportunities for CalFresh recipients that are required to perform community volunteer service to maintain benefits.

Alemany Farm Plan

The Alemany Farm Plan was developed over a year-long process with nonprofit site partners, with the goals of increasing coordination and community access, by creating a roadmap for new programming. It was implemented in August 2012.

Elements:

- Agricultural Production
 - 1.5 acres of the total 3.5 acre Farm Site is in agriculture production.
 - Before Farm Management Plan implementation, 2K pounds of produce grown each year. 26,000 pounds grown last fiscal year. 13 % increase over last year.
- Naturalized Open Space

- Demonstration gardens in native grassland, coastal scrub, riparian understory, and dune habitat.
- Water Features
 - An ephemeral creek feeds a lined pond, that is managed as a habitat for local and migratory birds and for wild-harvested food production.
- Animal Husbandry
 - Six honeybee colonies are managed on site by members of the San Francisco Beekeepers Association.
- Education and Classes
 - Farm Camp. Started in 2017. Four session per summer. Serve 15 youth ages 9-11 per session. 5 slots (1/3) reserved for youth scholarship positions per session.
 - Year-round workshop series held by site partner Friends of Alemany Farm, with support from SFRPD. 18 workshops per year on topics such as fruit tree pruning, seasonal vegetable gardening, native landscape management, pond management, introduction to beekeeping, plant-based dyes, and safe home food preservation.
 - 22 field trips with Youth Stewardship Program
- Green Jobs Skills
 - RPD supported three Green Jobs training programs in fiscal year 2017-2018; partnered with Enterprise Youth for Success, Student Conservation Association, and the Mayor's Youth Employment and Education Program.
 - 15 total youth served, providing 315 hours of service to Alemany Farm.

Volunteer Engagement at Alemany Farm

- SFRPD is now staffing workdays at Alemany Farm; we provided staffing support for 30% of site workdays in 2017-2018. (In current fiscal year, we expect to provide support to 80% of workdays.)
- In fiscal year 2017-2018, 11,225 hours of volunteer service performed on site. This is the equivalent FTE of 5.4 staff or \$326,535.25
- Alemany Farm receives the most consistent operating support from volunteers. In FY 2017-18, 210 distinct workdays took place at Alemany Farm, accounting for 15% of all volunteer workdays held on Rec and Park sites. Volunteers contributed 11,225 hours of service to Alemany Farm in FY 2017-2018.

Staff Recommendation

N/A

Supported By:

N/A

Opposed By:

N/A

Attachments:

Urban Agriculture Program Annual Report
Alemany Farm Management Plan