

The Sustainable Agricultural Commune

Sustainableagriculturalcommune.org

One of the Pilot Programs developed by the NCTT

The Call:

Organize and Mobilize!



We call on our brothers and sisters – all who believe in a sustainable future – to link with local underclass community organizers and pool their assets, expertise and labor to educate, organize and mobilize the community's residents for the sustainable community agricultural commune [or in short: Sustainable Agricultural Commune, S.A.C.].

Chronic poverty and underemployment – the legacy of corporate greed and political corruption in Amerika – can be directly linked to chronic disease, high obesity rates and the plethora of health problems that accompany them.

These types of physical debilities impact underclass communities disproportionately due primarily to anemic access to quality produce, meats, grains and vegetables in our communities.

Ecology

Of equal concern is the ecological impact of multinational corporate agri-concerns, from the exploitation of Third World brothers and sisters – some 90 percent of the produce consumed in the U.S. is grown in the Third World, while the majority of the rest comes from large corporate farms – to the adverse environmental impact of greenhouse gas emissions from shipping food thousands of miles to reach our tables. Yet it is within our power to change this dynamic by embracing sustainable urban farming as a viable alternative.

Reclaiming vacant lots

Throughout the underclass communities of Amerika, especially in the wake of record foreclosures and the intentional gentrification of our communities, there are vacant lots, open plots and tracts of aimless dirt that we can reclaim and transform into urban gardens that will not only feed the communities healthy and nutritious food, but also provide a valuable and significant source of revenue for them.

Health and Wealth, Dignity, Own your Economy!

Consider that less than 2 percent of the food consumed in metropolitan areas in the U.S. is grown there. Yet urban areas consume billions of dollars worth of food each year, including junk food, sodas, fast food, condiments and processed snacks that, unfortunately, are staples of many poor folks' diets because the stuff is cheap and filling.

But if our food was locally produced, it would not only be healthier and 50 percent cheaper than if you bought it at your supermarket, but also serve as a source of revenue for the community by selling the

surplus to local chefs, restaurants and our own farmers markets, while relying on organic and other agricultural advances to increase both quality and yields.

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Examples

We'd like to illustrate what we propose more clearly using Cleveland, Ohio, as an example. According to Entrepreneur Magazine (October 2011), by increasing local urban farming by 5 percent in greater Cleveland it would translate into \$750 million more in revenue for local purveyors. When was the last time a \$750 million business was relocated to your community, let alone the hood, barrio or trailer park?

Cleveland based business development analyst Michael Shuman did a study on what would happen if northeast Ohio managed to provide 25 percent more of the food it consumed. This report revealed that such a move would create over 27,000 new jobs, increase annual regional output by \$4.2 billion and grow tax revenue by more than \$125 million.

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In 2007, Cleveland became the first city in the U.S. to zone for community gardens. It now subsidizes farms in the city's core and the 6-acre farm plot that opened recently in the heart of the Ohio City neighborhood of Cleveland, only a few blocks from the Riverview Towers projects, not only services surrounding restaurants, but our brothers and sisters from the Riverview projects can buy fresh produce just outside their building, closer than the Safeway, Kroger or fast food joint, and 50 percent cheaper than its regular price.

Now imagine if that 6-acre farm was collectively owned and operated by the residents of the Riverview Towers projects. That's exactly what we are proposing here.

We call on our brothers and sisters – all who believe in a sustainable future – to link with local underclass community organizers and pool their assets, expertise and labor to educate, organize and mobilize the community's residents for the sustainable community agricultural commune (SCA commune) [or in short: Sustainable Agricultural Commune, S.A.C.].

Steps

Canvassing the community and cataloguing plots of land

Our first step will be in canvassing the community, distributing fliers to everyone, about our intention of building the SCA commune with that community, then going through the meticulous process of cataloguing each square yard of land, no matter how large or small the plot – who owns it, and what it will take to get it zoned and secured for community use.

Which crops grow best?

Simultaneously, another survey of that community and the local businesses which use produce and poultry must be conducted to determine which fruits, vegetables, herbs and grains are most widely consumed, popular and commercially valued in that community and area.

Once done this must be compared to which crops among those will grow most effectively and profusely in that unique climate and environment.

In so doing we must also consider new agricultural innovations such as vertical urban gardening, poultry cultivation through modern chicken coops such as those offered by “chicken cribs” (go to Backyardchickens.com) and free range techniques. The diversity of industry and innovative insight based in the movement for sustainability will prove particularly valuable as we seek contacts and assistance from conscious industry proponents, such as Jac Smit of the UrbanAgriculture Network, Michael Shuman, author of “Community Food Enterprise,” who is currently a consultant at Cutting Edge Capital in Oakland, California, or Dickson Despommier of the Vertical Farm Project and those amongst movement activists with the same expertise, insight or skill set.

Organizing the work

Equally essential at this stage will be our brothers and sisters of the S.A.C. in organizing movement activists, community organizers and residents into the divisions of labor necessary to initiate the commune.

Following the collective ownership format, we go to the people soliciting contributions of \$.50-\$1 from community residents and movement activists over a 90-day to six-month period, while securing volunteers from across the community and local movement to work the farms on a rotating basis. If one cannot contribute money, they can contribute their labor or both if they like.

Membership

Everyone who contributes something to that cycle will be given a commune membership card entitling them to 50 percent in produce and 50 percent in dividends. Therefore 50 percent of the seasonal yield will be set aside to feed the commune and 50 percent will be put on the market for sale. All produce sold to residents of that community will be discounted at our farmers’ markets, while chefs, restaurants and other businesses interested in our locally grown produce will receive it at the going rate.

Sixty percent of all profits (minus overhead) from the S.A.C. fund will be divided amongst commune members equally as dividends, while 40 percent will continue to incur interest in the fund as the \$.50-\$1 that community residents and local activists continue to contribute to the fund to expand our farms and branch out into poultry production and other husbandry. This will provide quality, organic and free range meats for our commune and potential customers in the same percentages and allotments previously discussed.

Outreach

We encourage the movement to reach out to conscious businesses like Greenaid, a L.A.-based guerilla gardening company that makes clay, compost and seed balls that can be tossed in derelict urban areas to

make them green spaces, and Urbio, a San Francisco-based company that makes planters for vertical urban gardening, for donations to this effort of equipment and material.

As the commune grows, the S.A.C. fund can turn its attention to funding other sympathetic ventures, such as a mobile slaughterhouse and produce distribution trucks, all employing only people from the communes or that community's local movement who are unemployed, broadening the scope of our farms and their positive impact on the underclass communities in which they are based.

Rooting the Community

The S.A.C. will serve to literally root the movement in the community while effecting positive change in the daily lives of the people. By providing these communities with healthy and nutritious food, creating a vital source of collective wealth, reclaiming and breathing life into what would be eyesores or an impetus for fascist tools of the ruling 1 percent – police, sheriffs etc. – to harass poor people in their own communities, we improve the quality of life for those of us most adversely affected by the current social order.

Our urban farms will provide a safe place of peace and prosperity for our people, our children and our youth to fellowship as they build a brighter future for themselves, their communities and this world, all from the power of their hands, heads and hearts.

In addition we open an entirely new industry with limitless economic potential in the center of the underclass communities of Amerika, and it is owned, operated and patronized by those who are its residents, the "99 percent." This program corresponds to No. 2 of our **10 Core Objectives**.

About the NCTT:

N.C.T.T. stands for N.A.R.N. (New Afrikan Revolutionary Nationalism) Collective Think Tank. Our mission is to create, develop, review and implement programs, initiatives and concepts with, and for, individuals, groups, community activists across the U.S. to realize **10 Core Objectives for Progress and Social Transformation** as articulated by the N.A.R.N. Collective Think Tank.

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All coordinators of the NCTT are held in solitary confinement, an internationally recognized form of torture, in a SHU (Security Housing Unit), California. They have no access to computers or the internet. Coordinators of the **NCTT-Cor-SHU** are:

Michael Zaharibu Dorrough, J. Heshima, Kambui Robinson, Jabari Scott (at NCTT-CCI)

Donate

You can donate to us via Paypal: NCTTCorSHU@gmail.com – Thank You!!