

The Future of Urban Agriculture in Toronto

Event Summary

Markham House – November 14, 2015

Building Roots hosted a conversation on urban agriculture with six innovative Torontonians sharing their ideas on where the future lies. The presentations were leading edge in community and small business-led initiatives that create integrated systems of sustainability, with people using nature to create more resilient cities. The event had 80 guests and the Facebook event had 12,000 impressions.

The presentations were as follows:

Rhonda Teitel-Payne, [Toronto Urban Growers](#)

Rooftops and hydro corridors can and are being used for productive urban farming in Toronto.

Gillian Leitch, [The Toronto Beekeepers Co-operative](#)

Bees are integral to the health of urban agriculture, they produce honey and other products that can be created and sold by communities.

Jocelyn Molyneux, [Wastenot Worm Farms: Green Bins Growing](#)

Our food waste can be cycled back as high nutrient food growing material by worms, to farm in the City.

Evan Bell, [Waterfarmers Aquaponics](#)

Closed-loop systems of all different scales can use water and fish to grow healthy vegetables and farms.

Ryan Johnson, [Evergreen](#), Urban Acre

Our buildings can be more like living machines, which produce food as by-products where people live.

Anthony Campbell, [GrowForGoodInc](#)

Mushrooms grown in buildings create indoor urban farms which make excellent schools for children.

The presentations stimulated discussion as to how these initiatives can be further developed and integrated as part of the fabric of Toronto and as the city continues to build. Many questions to presenters were directed to the specific functioning of different processes, and to how people could actively engage in existing programs and build future ideas. Many guests hoped for the integration of innovative urban agriculture components in Mirvish Village that could build upon the work and ideas presented, particularly developing projects that brought waste from residents back into food production systems for higher level sustainability of the neighbourhood. There was an appetite to continue learning and to support and tour existing facilities and projects, which Building Roots can help facilitate, and explore options for planning of urban agriculture in Mirvish Village.





Guests at Markham House observing Future of Urban Agriculture presenters



Jocelyn Molyneux describes how worms create quality compost