

The process of creating the CSU/EXPO Mini Urban Farm was started by Community Services Unlimited in late 2004. With the support of thousands of volunteers, and multiple partners the farm has grown into a model for urban food production, and a beautiful green space for gathering, learning and building community. CSU provides free hands-on educational programming at the farm year round, including a youth internship and home gardening and nutrition program, along with weekly volunteer opportunities. We grow a wide variety of fruits, vegetables and herbs, with a focus on California natives and those that reflect the cultures of our community.

### **Where does produce grown at the farm go?**

- ❖ Participants in CSU's [Garden Gateway](#) program receive free recipe prep-kits with produce from the farm so they can prepare the healthy recipes demonstrated in the workshops, at home. They also receive plants, seeds, and compost produced on the farm to support their efforts to grow food at home. The program has been offered at the CSU/EXO urban farm for 10 years. Due to the pandemic this program is [now virtual](#), but we have continued to offer no-contact pick-up events where over 100 South Central households have received produce, plants, and seeds from the Farm to support their efforts to grow food at home in order to ensure their health and food security.
- ❖ Youth in CSU's [From the Ground Up](#) program learn about the global and local food systems, climate change, and environmental racism and justice while learning about healthy eating and how to grow food on the farm. They plant, care for, harvest and taste the food they have grown at the EXPO Farm, often being exposed to the taste of locally grown foods for the first time and to new foods they have never experienced.
- ❖ Produce from the EXPO Farm is shared with South Central residents through CSU's COVID-19 sponsored groceries program. Over the last 8-months CSU has provided sponsored weekly groceries to 116 local households. Our focus has been to provide groceries to new CalFresh applicants while they wait to receive their benefits, and to neighbors in need who aren't eligible for CalFresh, or for whom the benefits do not match the needs of their household. Nearly 1000 grocery packages have been distributed to neighbors across South Central, each containing fresh, beyond organic produce from the CSU/EXPO mini urban farm and from regional small farmers.
- ❖ Produce is made available through CSU's produce bag subscription program. The program offers subscribers a bag of fresh, seasonal beyond organic produce each week. The bags are available in 2 sizes and 3 varieties (original, diabetic friendly, and snack/no-cook) to meet the needs of subscribers. Subscriptions are offered at a reduced "community rate" for subscribers with tighter budgets, and at a 50% discount to those who pay with EBT. Produce grown at the CSU/EXPO farm ensures that residents of South Central have access to high quality locally grown produce regardless of their income.
- ❖ In 2020 approximately 750 lbs. of produce was harvested from the farm. The majority was distributed to community residents at no cost through the efforts described above. What's left is sold through CSU's [Village Market Place](#), which offers a 50% discount on all produce purchased with EBT. The very small amount of revenue generated from sales of produce from the farm supports the on-going maintenance of the farm.