2025

Urban Farm Impact Report



Toronto Metropolitan University

Urban Farm

Year at a Glance

In 2025, two interconnected themes surfaced–pollinators and seeds–highlighting the cyclical relationship between growth, regeneration, and time.

Pollinators play a vital role in enabling seeds to form, while seeds store energy that sustain future ecosystems, reinforcing how past efforts continue to influence present and future work. It reminds us that singular events within an ecosystem are knit together across time.

In 2025, the Urban Farm welcomed new collaborations and drew strength from efforts sown deep in the past.

Toronto Metropolitan University

Urban Farm

Year at a Glance

Starting new seeds for future sustenance

A partnership with **Miinikaan Innovation & Design** supported the **Indigenous Foodways** growing spaces, enhancing and strengthening cultural connections and knowledge exchange.

Community engagement deepened through the launch of the **“Mighty Little Seeds” for Black History Month**, promoting seed sovereignty and empowering participants to continue growing food at home.

The Urban Farm gained access to new resources by securing a **Farm Business Registration with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture** and joining the **National Farmers Union**.



Year at a Glance

Collaboration through cross-pollination

The Natural Dye & Textile Garden gained wider public attention through a Toronto Star feature, showcasing the **Ecological Market Garden's** partnership with **Fashion at the Creative School** and the Urban Farm's role in connecting sustainable growing practices with textile arts. The collaboration continues to create opportunities for hands-on learning and exploration of plant-based dyes and fibres.

A partnership with the **Sustainability Office** brought students in **Environment and Urban Sustainability** to the rooftop to study pollinators, along with researchers from **TOsustain** at the University of Toronto and Seneca Polytechnic.



Year at a Glance

Connecting past to future

In celebration of **National Pollinator Week**, the Urban Farm partnered with Sustainability Office, Center for Studies in Food Security and School of Social Work to lead a **serviceberry foraging walk**. Using an archived planting map, participants located over 20 of the 53 serviceberries planted by Nutrition students in 2011, learning about ethical foraging and the importance of native plants for pollinators and wildlife.

The **Rooftop Farmer Training** returned in 2025, welcoming 10 participants for a hands-on journey from seed to harvest. Relaunched after a six-year hiatus following rooftop renovations and the pandemic, the program successfully emerged from dormancy, marking a successful revival of the program.



Updates from the Urban Farm Team

Congratulations to **Nicole Austin, Black-led programs coordinator**, who was honoured with the Viola Desmond TMU Staff Award in recognition of her leadership and contributions to advancing equity and inclusion at Toronto Metropolitan University.

This award celebrates Nicole's vision and dedication in founding the **Black Food Sovereignty initiatives** at the Urban Farm, creating meaningful opportunities for Black community members to connect with food, land, culture, and ancestral knowledge.

Toronto Metropolitan University

Urban Farm



Photo caption: Nicole Austin with an okra plant on the DCC rooftop

Updates from the Urban Farm Team

A farewell message from **Ines Lacarne, field engagement coordinator** at the Urban Farm:

“While I am excited for what my next chapter holds, I am also sad to say goodbye. The last six years at the Urban Farm have been truly wonderful, transformative, and rewarding. It has been a great joy to be a part of this project, to see it grow and to connect with students, researchers, faculty - and with the greater community: the plants, the bees, the butterflies, the worms, the soil microbes…”

Best of luck in your future endeavors, Ines!

Toronto Metropolitan University

Urban Farm



Photo caption: Ines Lacarne poses on top of straw bales on the ENG rooftop

Updates from the Urban Farm Team

In 2025, **nine TMU students were employed** at the Urban Farm: four full-time Field Apprentices in summer and five part-time Field Assistants in fall.

Amongst the crew, the following disciplines were represented: Architectural Science, Electrical Engineering, Environment and Urban Sustainability, Fashion, Food and Nutrition, Geographic Analysis, Journalism, Marketing Management, and Occupational Health and Safety.

Thank you to all our student staff for their dedication, hard work and continued contributions!

Toronto Metropolitan University

Urban Farm



Photo caption: Students gardening on the ENG rooftop

Engagement: Overview

The Urban Farm responded to over

200 requests

engaging with a total of

3367 people

2562 guests

visited the two rooftops through tours, workshops, experiential learning and events

Off the rooftops, the Urban Farm engaged with

705 attendees

on campus and beyond through presentations, knowledge exchange and event collaborations





Engagement:

Programs & Events Offered by the Urban Farm

We hosted 80+ rooftop programs and events:

- 20 Workbee Wednesdays
- 18 summer Open Farms, ending in a Harvest Party
- 13 Field Workshops
- 8 Indigenous Foodways meetups
- 7 Rooftop Farmer Training sessions
- 5 Medicine walks and events
- 4 Tea & Talks
- 4 Seedball workshops
- 3 Learning Circles

Photo caption:
Community members participating in flower workshop



Photo caption:
Urban Farm Field Apprentices visiting Evergreen Brickworks

Engagement:

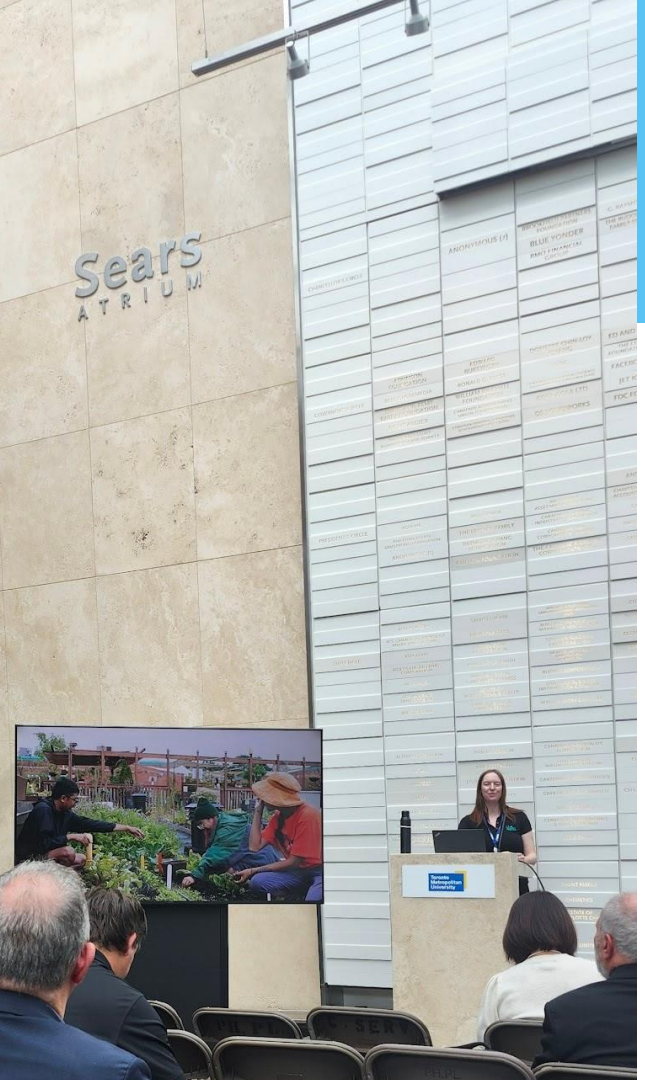
Tour Highlights

586 people were led on a rooftop tour through **36 chartered tours, 8 student-led ticketed tours and 2 free community tours.**

Visitors from other universities joined us from all over the world:

- Doshisha University in **Japan**
- The University of Munich in **Germany**
- Hong Kong Baptist University in **China**
- Waipapa Taumata Rau (University of Auckland) in **Aotearoa (New Zealand)**

Team tours were exchanged with **Evergreen Brickworks** and **Toronto Botanical Gardens**, bringing the Urban Farm Field Apprentices to these sites and welcoming their teams to the visit the rooftop farms at TMU.



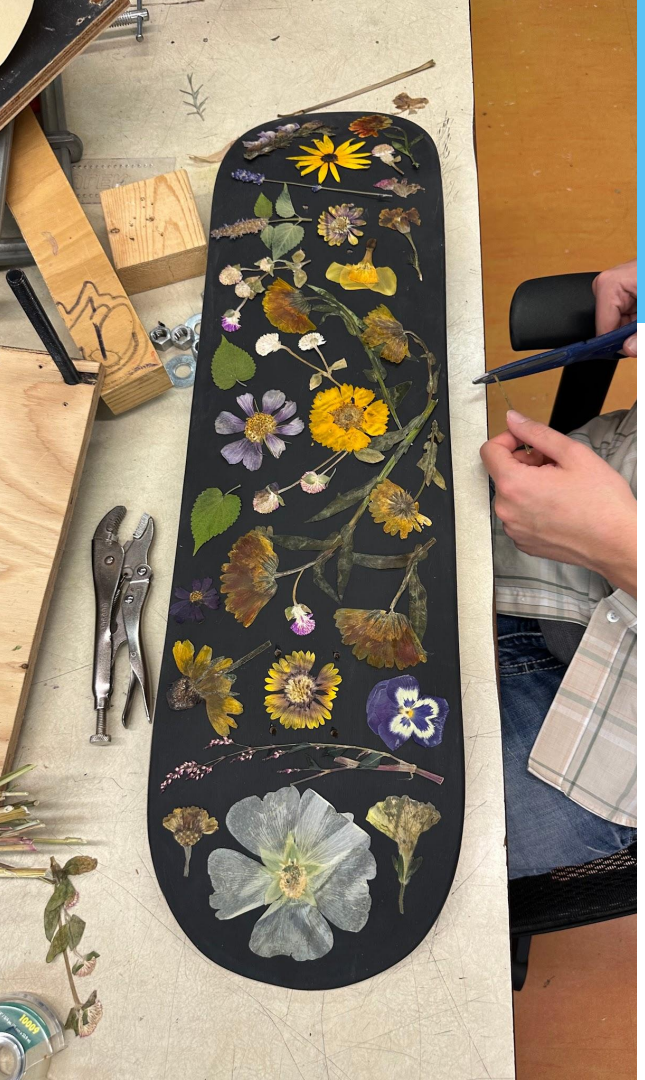
Engagement:

Community Collaborations

Green Roofs for Healthy Cities brought **72 attendees** to TMU for the **Grey to Green conference**.

Through expert-led presentations, panel discussions, and case studies, the event engaged professionals, researchers, and policymakers in conversation around green infrastructure, climate resilience, urban biodiversity, and sustainable design strategies.

Photo caption:
A panelist presents at the Grey to Green conference



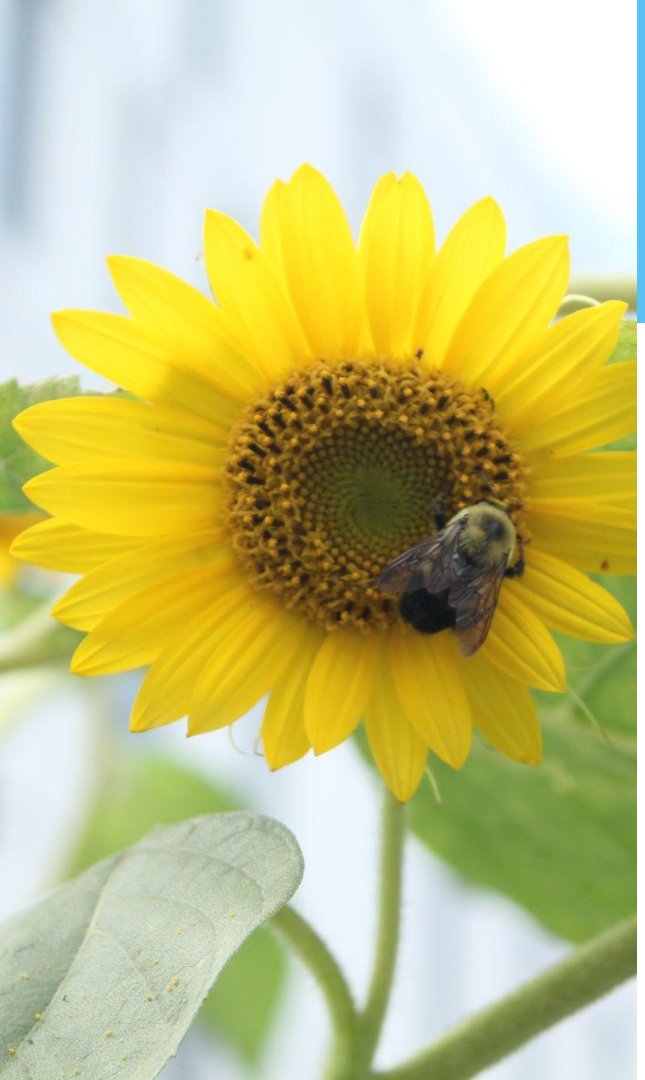
Engagement:

Community Collaborations

Oasis Skateboard Factory Alternative Secondary School participated in natural dye and flower pressing art projects for an upcoming showcase that will take place in 2026 at Evergreen Brickworks.

The students also **collaborated on a hand-crafted, TMU-branded skateboard** using flowers harvested on the ENG rooftop flower farm to display at the Farm Stand.

Photo caption:
A student assembles pressed flowers for a custom designed skateboard



Engagement:

Community Collaborations

Ontario Native Women's Association hosted **Knowledge Sharing: Aakwa'Ode'Ewin (Courage for Change)** at the DCC rooftop and Sears Atrium aimed at increasing awareness for anti-human trafficking programs.

This day-long event included a rooftop tour of the Indigenous Foodways and a traditional tobacco tying activity.

Photo caption:
A wild bee gathers pollen from a sunflower on the DCC rooftop



Engagement:

Community Collaborations

The Ontario Fibreshed group gathered on the ENG rooftop and toured the **Natural Dye and Fibre Garden**, a partnership with **Fashion at the Creative School**.

The visit celebrated the student-led **documentary called “Circular Series”**, which explores the full life cycles of natural fibres.

Photo caption:
Indigo growing on the ENG rooftop

Engagement:

Requests Fulfilled by the Urban Farm

65 academic requests fulfilled for TMU students, faculty, visiting researchers, campus groups, and community partners

13 requests fulfilled for information and data related ecological rooftop farming and food sovereignty

10 external presentations delivered off campus or virtually

3 groups booked the Daphne Cockwell Complex (DCC) rooftop for private events

47 engagement requests fulfilled for collaborative rooftop events and knowledge exchange

13 internal presentations delivered on campus at TMU

12 media requests fulfilled

Toronto Metropolitan University Urban Farm

Indigenous Foodways Program

The Indigenous Foodways program aims to promote Indigenous wisdom and traditional agricultural practices through knowledge exchange and community engagement.

Emphasizing the importance of honorable practices, traditionally grown medicines are made accessible to the community while building meaningful and respectful relationships of reciprocity.





Photo caption: Students, staff and community members harvesting on the DCC rooftop

Indigenous Foodways Program

Programs Offered

Hosted the first **Fostering Allyship: Discussion & Medicine Tour** in recognition of **National Indigenous Peoples Day**, leading participants through interactive medicine walk and creating space for dialogue, reflection and learning, centered around strengthening relationships.

Hosted four **Community Healing Harvests**, bringing community members together through seasonal harvesting, connection to the land and shared learning.

Offered 10 bi-weekly **Indigenous Foodways Meetup Group** sessions from May to October, providing an ongoing space for community members to gather, share knowledge and deepen their connections to Indigenous Foodways.



Indigenous Foodways Program

Programs Offered

Led workshops on nine different themes:

- Sweetgrass braiding/teachings
- Tobacco tie making
- Smudge bundle making
- Community Medicine Walks
- Community healing harvests for bundle building
- Medicine processing
- Terrarium building and maintenance workshop
- Propagation and seed germination methods
- Medicine tea making with Medicinal Apothecary inventory

Photo caption:
A student prepares medicine bundles on the DCC rooftop



Photo caption: Braided sweetgrass and tobacco drying on the DCC rooftop

Indigenous Foodways Program

Harvest and Distribution

Donated over **30 plants** to support regional Indigenous garden initiatives:

- 10 plants donated to the Gerstein Crisis Centre
- 4 sweetgrass plants donated and planted in TRSM healing garden
- 10 transplants donated and planted in Masaryk Community Healing Garden
- 4 sweetgrass plants were donated to Waseskun's garden (located in Montreal, facilitated, transported, and planted by Michael Mihalics, Indigenous Advisor at TRSM).

The new Indigenous Foodways Medicinal Apothecary was initiated, based on student feedback. Piloted the sale of elderberry and mullein for the first time at the Farm Stand, generating $100+ in sales.



Photo caption: Sage bundles assembled on the DCC rooftop

Indigenous Foodways Program

Harvest and Distribution

Harvested and donated over **7.6lb of sage** to campus events:

- The TMU Pow Wow
- Campus-wide smudge - this was the first initiative of its kind to take place across campus
- Orange Shirt Day
- summer 2025 convocation
- fall 2025 orientation

Donations reached **5 external community partners**:

- Native Child and Family Services of Toronto
- Native Women's Resource Centre
- Ontario Native Women's Association
- Giwabamiin Herbal Street Clinic
- Toronto Council Fire (through LFE)

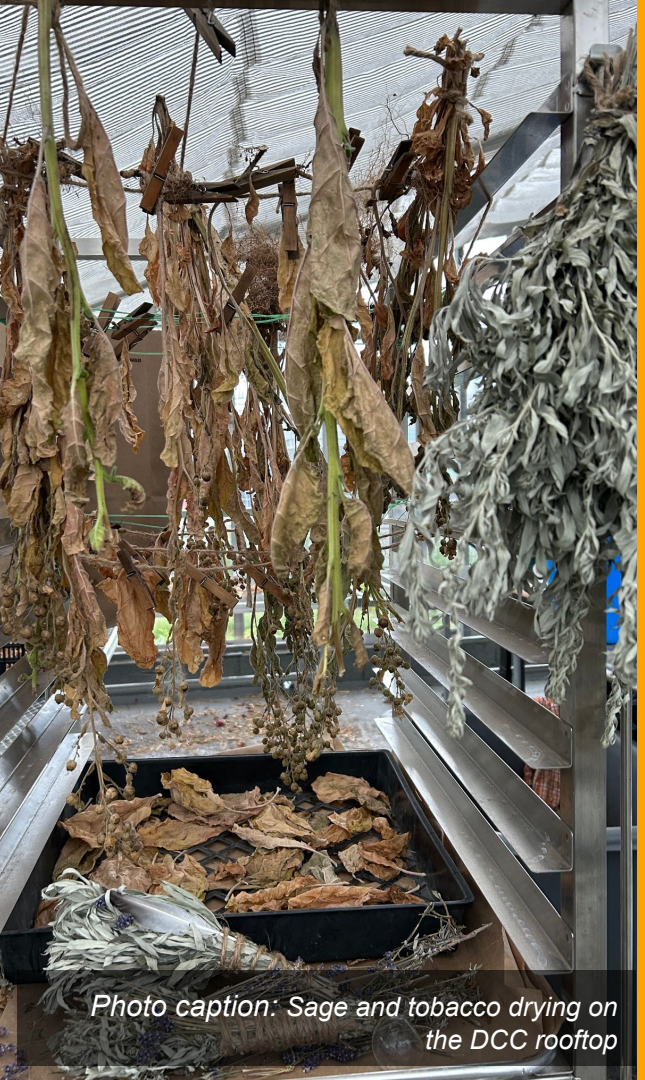


Photo caption: Sage and tobacco drying on the DCC rooftop

Indigenous Foodways Program

Collaborations and partnerships

Campus-Wide Smudge collaboration across departments on October 10: the Indigenous Foodways Program provided the foundational medicines for 10 simultaneous smudge ceremonies across campus, facilitating a unified initiative for the university community.

Full Moon teaching partnership with the Office of Indigenous Initiatives, Rebirthed Teachings: the Indigenous Foodways Program hosted 4 Full Moon ceremony events on May 13, June 10, July 8 and August 12 on the rooftop, led and facilitated by Amy Desjarlais.

“Tea & Talk” Rooftop Series: Piloted 4 sessions in collaboration with Gdoo-maawnjidimi Mompii Indigenous Student Services (GMISS), including hosting international scholars visiting from Aotearoa (New Zealand).



Photo caption: White corn harvested from the Three Sisters mounds

Indigenous Foodways Program

Collaborations and partnerships

Indigenous Student Association (ISA) hosted a student welcoming event for first-year and returning Indigenous students on the DCC. Medicines were provided for activities. The Indigenous Foodways Program provided the space and medicines for TMU's ISA to support student wellness and student-led initiatives on our campus.

University of Toronto's Indigenous Student Association participated in a tour and training at TMU's Indigenous Foodways Program to learn how to start their own Medicine Garden.

Contributed to the City of Toronto's Circular Economy Road Map Phase 4 Report, published December 16, 2025.

Waipapa Taumata Rau
University of Auckland

Friday, Sep 26, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

We are writing to express our strong support for the initiative being led by Samantha Williams and their team at Toronto Metropolitan University, who are caretakers of the rooftop garden and organisers of the Tea and Talk groups for Indigenous faculty and students. As international visitors from Aotearoa New Zealand, we (Dr Sue Adams, Senior Lecturer and Nurse, and Ebony Komene, Indigenous Registered Nurse and Doctoral Candidate, both from the University of Auckland) had the privilege and pleasure of being hosted by Samantha and the team on Wednesday, 24th of September 2025.

Creating spaces for Indigenous connection within academic institutions is deeply important. During our visit, we were given the opportunity to share food, exchange insights, and build relationships grounded in Indigenous concepts of wellbeing—concepts that are interconnected with our communities, environments, and ancestral knowledge. We were gifted knowledge and physical gifts of Indigenous plant medicine and participated in a cedar tea ceremony, which provided a powerful example of decolonising and Indigenising practice within the academy. Participating in practices that affirm the importance of Indigenous knowledge in academic spaces, resonated strongly with our own commitments to Indigenous health and education in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

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(continued)

The generosity and wisdom shared by Samantha and the team left us inspired and encouraged to continue strengthening Indigenous connections globally, reminding us of the shared struggles and strengths of our communities across different contexts. We found that the development of the rooftop gardens, alongside the Tea and Talk gatherings, offers meaningful opportunities for Indigenous faculty and students to:

- Practice Indigenous gardening, harvesting, and preparation of medicines,
- Learn and affirm Indigenous protocols,
- Strengthen pride in Indigenous identity,
- Build confidence, competence, and resilience within the academy.

This initiative reflects a culturally responsive pedagogy. It nurtures wellbeing, fosters meaningful relationships, and creates culturally safe and inclusive spaces where Indigenous peoples can connect and flourish. These benefits extend beyond the university, as participants bring their confidence, knowledge, and identity into their professional, community, and whānau/family contexts.

We also want to acknowledge and commend the leadership of Samantha and her team. Their care, unity, reciprocity, and aroha/love are evident in every aspect of their work. It is clear that these values underpin the sustainability and transformative impact of this initiative. We believe that this is an important model for Indigenising academic spaces, and we hope it will continue to grow and be supported.

Ngā manaakitanga,

Toronto Metropolitan University

Urban Farm

Dr Sue Adams
Senior Lecturer, University of Auckland

Ebony Komene
Indigenous Registered Nurse & Doctoral Candidate, University of Auckland

Black Food Sovereignty Initiatives

The Black Food Sovereignty Initiatives at the Urban Farm engage the Black community through four pillars: food literacy, environmental stewardship, community healing, and food and social justice.

These programs invite Black students, faculty, staff and the broader community to share in the harvest of crops enjoyed across the African diaspora.



Black Food Sovereignty Initiatives

Highlights

The **Nutrition Camp** hosted two consecutive cohorts in 2025 for ~45 campers aged 8-12 who love cooking. Campers got to cook with produce donated from the Urban Farm and participate in a rooftop scavenger hunt to learn about Black Food Sovereignty and Indigenous Foodways

Funds secured through SSHRC for **Black Land Living Lab**, securing $277,000 from 2025-2029. A collaboration with multiple institutes, across multiple disciplines: TMU School of Child & Youth Care, Black Food Sovereignty Alliance, University College London, University of Toronto, University of Windsor, Black Creek Community Farm, UpRooted Black Earth Stewards



Photo caption: Okra, African eggplant and scallions growing on the DCC rooftop



Photo caption: Students attend an event on the DCC rooftop

Black Food Sovereignty Initiatives

50+ collaborations across campus and the community

2 international panels/presentations

- Urban Farm's Black Food Sovereignty initiative in partnership with Black Food Sovereignty Alliance and the University of Ghana
- University of Hohenheim, Stuttgart, Germany:
- Hosted Birgit Hoinle, lead visiting professor, for tours and field work
- Virtual presentation for class in Germany

Classroom presentations for TMU programs

- Sociology of Food & Eating, Sociology
- School of Social work
- TMU's Filipino Student Association
- Black Childhoods in Canada, School of Early Childhood Studies



Photo caption: Students attend an event on the DCC rooftop

Black Food Sovereignty Initiatives

50+ collaborations across campus and the community

2 community consultations and collaborations:

- Newmarket African Caribbean Community Network
- Visioning Session on Climate and Water Resilience in Black and Racialized Communities (various TMU departments (Politics and Public Administration, Environmental Applied Science and Management, School of Public Policy and Democratic Innovation)

3 recurring collaborations renewed:

- 3rd year, Black Youth Farming Collective, TMU Child & Youth studies
- 3rd year, Black 1st students frosh week, TMU Student Life
- Food Studies undergraduate student from George Brown

Black Food Sovereignty Initiatives

Publications & Media Features

Interest in the Black Food Sovereignty Initiatives continues to grow, with notable mentions in five publications:

- Included in TMU's Strategic Research Plan 2025
- Consulted on For the Culture with Amanda Parris Season 2 Episode 2, Black Food Sovereignty
- Quoted in University Affairs, Fostering inclusion on a multi-cultural campus
- Featured on CBC Metro Morning
- Interviewed by The Guardian for a spotlight on White Velvet Okra, a 120-year-old heirloom crop with roots in the American South - its cultivation represents a significant step for knowledge reclamation, cultural resilience and a continuation of food heritage



Photo caption: Community members attend a tour on the DCC rooftop

Program participants

Celebrating collaborations!

Indigenous Foodways & Black Food Sovereignty

As a unique space dedicated to both Black and Indigenous Food Sovereignty, the DCC lends itself to cross cultural exchange through collaborative programs that celebrate Indigenous Wisdom and Black Ancestral Knowledge. In 2025, two co-led events highlight the meaningful connections that emerge through collaboration:

- The fourth annual spring workshop was held for SpruceLabs' Earth Tending Green Infrastructure Training series, with support from Miziwe Biik, where participants engaged in hands-on learning on the DCC rooftop
- The Black Food Sovereignty Initiative teamed up with the Indigenous Foodways Program for the second time to co-lead the final Learning Circle of the 2025 growing season, exploring the traditional foods and medicines grown on the DCC rooftop

Toronto Metropolitan University

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Photo caption: Students gather on the DCC rooftop

Ecological Market Garden

The Ecological Market Garden grows food, medicines and culturally significant plants using diverse foodways, knowledge and growing techniques.

Guided by a commitment to community well-being and ecological health, it features a four-year crop rotation alongside dedicated plots for food sovereignty, pollinators, cut-flowers, medicinal teas, natural dyes and fibres, mushrooms, composting and container gardening.





Photo caption: Program participants gardening on the ENG rooftop

Ecological Market Garden

Overview

The crop plan focused on high yielding successions of market garden favourites such as carrots, cucumbers, tomatoes, and greens to reach as many distribution points as possible.

The pollinator garden added four new Ontario native plants: Spotted Joe Pye Weed, Culver’s Root, Smooth Rose and Canadian Anemone.

TMU Eats served 275 Harvest Bowls at the summer Open Farms, accounting for 16% (136 kg) of the total rooftop harvest (2300 kg).



Photo caption: Program participants harvesting on the ENG rooftop

Ecological Market Garden

Production highlights

Toronto’s 2025 growing season was marked by dramatic temperature swings, followed by extreme heat and prolonged drought, creating a high-stress, low-moisture environment for many crops.

While some benefited from the heat, overall yields declined - particularly among nightshades. Tomatoes and peppers experienced blotchy ripening, potatoes saw reduced tuber production, and eggplants produced less fruit.

In contrast, curbits performed strongly, with increased yields and bumper harvests of cucumbers, summer squash, and winter squash.

Ecological Market Garden:

Harvest & Distribution

Harvested 6,500+ items (~ 2,300 kg) of produce, distributed through the Urban Farm's **Model of thirds** with at least one-third donated to the community, up to one-third sold at market value, and one-third offered to TMU students at equitable rates. Inspired by Indigenous principles of reciprocity and honourable harvest, this model maximizes community access while generating revenue to sustain farm operations.

Donations	Accessible rates	Market price

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Ecological Market Garden: Top 10 highest-yielding crops

1904 Cucumbers increasing 14.84% from 2024

873 summer squash

775 Garlic Bulbs

505 Pints of tomatoes

396 Bags of salad mix

357 Bunches of kale

287 Bunches of carrots

272 Eggplants

264 Sweet peppers

242 Bags of baby bok choy

Toronto Metropolitan University

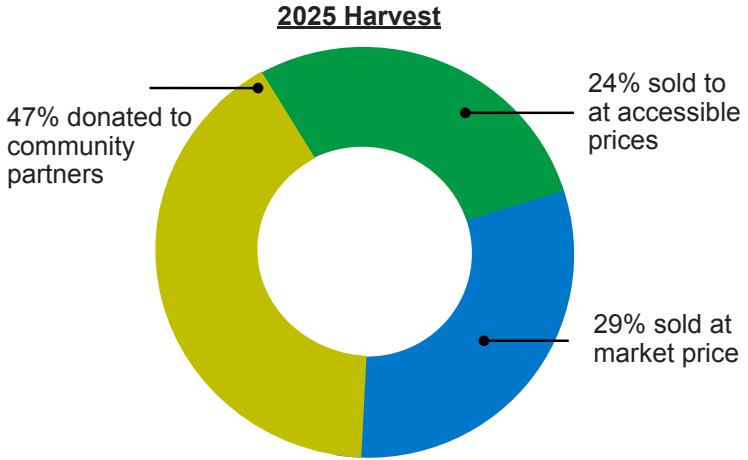
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Ecological Market Garden:

Donations: ~47% of total yield

- ~500+ kg distributed off campus to community partners: **Building Roots'** Give-What-You-Can Moss Park Market, **Community Fridges Toronto** and the **Second Harvest** Food Rescue App

- 400+ kg distributed on campus to **Workbee Wednesday** and **Learning Circle** participants, to the Student Union's **Good Food Center** in the Student Campus Centre, and to the **Common Pot's** free soup initiative at the **Mutual Market**



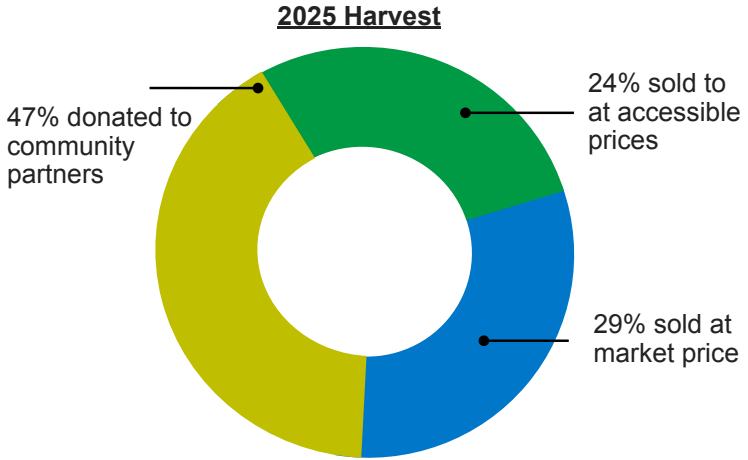
Toronto Metropolitan University

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Ecological Market Garden:

Accessible rates: ~24% of total yield

- ~35% of **Garden Grab Bag** sales
- ~36% of items purchased at the **Farm Stand**
- ~130+ kg was sold as **Harvest Bowls** in partnership with **TMU Eats**



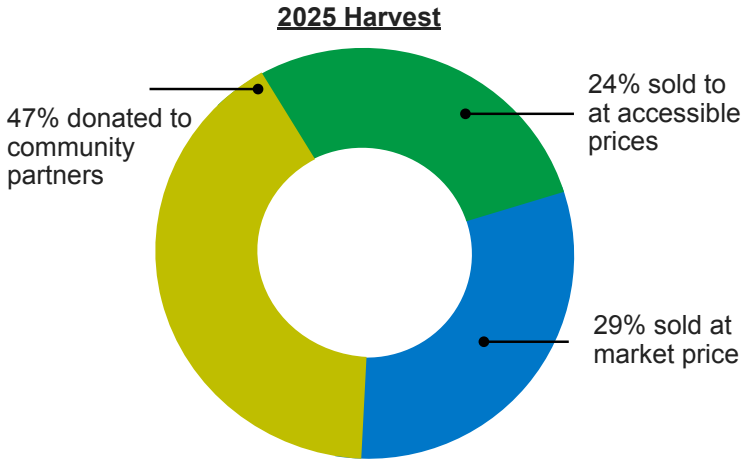
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Ecological Market Garden:

Market price: ~29% of total yield

- Online as **Garden Grab Bags** and **Bankra Baskets**
- At the **Farm Stand** on the DCC Rooftop and on Gould Street



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Urban Farm

Urban Farm Living Lab

The Living Lab supports research, scholarly, research and creative partnerships through collaborative rooftop farming experimentation. It fosters co-creation, innovation and knowledge-sharing to develop practical, real-world solutions.

Living Lab collaborations prioritize interdisciplinary, community informed approaches grounded in mutual respect, cultural centeredness, diverse ways of knowing, Two-Eyed Seeing and community-based participatory action research.



Urban Farm Living Lab:

Partner Spotlight

The **Natural Dye & Fibre Garden**, a collaboration between the TMU Urban Farm and the School of Fashion, was featured in **DesignTO Festival** for **The Flax Project.**

Led by Professor Rachel MacHenry, the project explored the connections between land-based learning, sustainable fashion and traditional textile-making practices, highlighting the role of the Urban Farm as a space for interdisciplinary collaboration, creative experimentation and knowledge exchange.



Photo caption: Exhibit for the The Flax Project at the DesignTO Festival

Urban Farm Living Lab:

Partner Spotlight

The **Natural Dye & Fibre Garden** project has received significant media attention, with four features highlighting its innovative approach to connecting agriculture, fashion, education and sustainability.

- **The Eye Opener, Rogene Teodoro:** TMU's Urban Farm and Fashion School collaborate on textile exhibition,
- **Podagogies: A Learning & Teaching Podcast, Curtis Maloley and Chelsea Jones:** Episode 33: Teaching Sustainable Fashion through Land-based Learning with Rachel MacHenry,
- **The Toronto Star, Marco Chown Oved:** A Dyeing Breed: Rooftop Garden at TMU keeps traditional textile-making methods alive


PROUDLY CANADIAN OWNED SINCE 1892

SUNDAY STAR

WEATHER HIGH 17 C | MIX OF SUN AND CLOUDS | MAP A18

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2025

A DYEING BREED

Rooftop garden at TMU keeps traditional textile-making methods alive

HEALTH CARE

Project aims to speed trauma care

Mobile teams of doctors, paramedics would treat victims at accident scenes

MARCO CHOWN OVED
CLIMATE CHANGE REPORTER

High above the urban clatter of jackhammers, sirens and car horns, a monarch butterfly flits between the bright yellow and orange blossoms of an African marigold and the tiny fuchsia flowers of a Japanese indigo.

The rooftop farm at Toronto Metropolitan University is a hive of activity this time of year, with insects pollinating plants, staff harvesting produce and students carting bales of hay to cover the soil before winter.

While community members have benefited from the vegetables that have been grown here for more than a decade, the Urban Farm on the roof of the George Vari Engineering and Computing Building on Church Street has now expanded its offerings to include plants cultivated not for nutrition but for fashion.

"Everyone's talking about sustainable food, but no one thinks about sustainable clothes," said Jess Russell, operations co-ordinator at one of TMU's two rooftop farms. "This project has sparked a ripple effect across the farm. We're now doing so much more than just growing food."

Sectioned off from the tomatoes and cabbages, the natural dye and fibre garden is filled with plants that were once among the most coveted and useful in the world, but have become neglected as industri-

Jess Russell is operations co-ordinator at Toronto Metropolitan University's Urban Farm, which has a natural dye and fibre garden.

SEE GARDEN A4

Photo caption: Newspaper feature on the Natural Dye & Fibre Garden

Urban Farm Living Lab: Collaborations & Partnerships

Toronto Metropolitan University

Urban Farm

Internal

- **3rd year hosting** cold plunges for **Ted Rogers School of Management Human Resources students:** 60-80 students took the plunge
- **TMU Environment and Urban Sustainability students** installed and monitored an insect hotel on the ENG rooftop
- **TMU Department of Chemistry and Biology and the School of Nutrition** paired up to study crop storage and shelf life with samples collected from the rooftops over five weeks in summer
- Agricultural waste was provided for a biochar concrete project with the **Toronto Metropolitan Engineering Concrete Toboggan team**
- Included in a report on “Decomposition as Creation: The Role of Compost in Regenerating Agriculture and Ecosystems” for Urban Agriculture certificate at **The Chang School of Continuing Education**
- **Fulfilled short-term/one-time Living Lab requests for:** Film TMU, TMU School of Journalism, TMU Department of English, School of Fashion, Social Ventures Zone, Faculty of Arts, RTA Media Production, School of Nutrition, TMU ENG + FEAS Outreach
- **5 departments at TMU** submitted for new Living Lab partnerships for the season ahead in 2026 and met with applicants to set the wheels in motion: **Social Work, Nursing, Creative School, Fashion, Geography**

Urban Farm Living Lab: Collaborations & Partnerships

Toronto Metropolitan University

Urban Farm

External

- **Kansas State University masters student** conducted interviews on designing a medicine garden and Indigenous Foodways program for an Indigenous University
- **Advanced Cropping Systems students** at the **University of Manitoba** conducted interviews on crop planning and regenerative agriculture
- **University of Toronto Scarborough's TOsustain:** Towards Sustainable Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture for Net-zero Food Systems collected data for three research studies: pollination, soil carbon, and crop diversity
- **University of Toronto's Green Roof Innovation Testing (GRIT) Lab** conducted research through site visits and surveys for their forum on "Scaling up Toronto's Urban Rooftop Agriculture: How can we design buildings to be rooftop agriculture-ready?"
- **Michael Power - St. Joseph's High School' International Baccalaureate Diploma student** conducted research through site visits on how green roofs affect local microclimate conditions compared to conventional rooftops in downtown Toronto
- **York University Research** for design project conduct interviews on engaging newcomers in community garden spaces
- **University of Toronto Masters student** conducted interviews on the role of Indigenous urban farming initiatives in cultivating and transmitting Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) in cities
- **Seneca College Polytechnic Institute's Workplace Safety and Prevention placement students** produced a "Manual Material Handling (MMH) Gap Analysis & Safety Recommendations" through hands-on site visits in collaboration with Environmental Health and Safety at TMU



Photo caption: pathway to reconciliation in honor of the late Joan for her contribution to the Indigenous Foodways Program

Major Donors

We wish to express our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the following community members and organizations who have generously supported the Urban Farm in 2025-2026.

- ***Jim & Vicki Wilson Family Fund at The Calgary Foundation*** *for your ongoing support of the* ***Field Apprentice Program****.*
- ***Graywood Developments*** *for your multi-year support of the* ***Graywood Development Fresh Produce program****.*
- ***Harbinger Fund at Makeway*** *for their support of the* ***Indigenous Foodways Program****, pathway to reconciliation in memory of Joan VanDuzer, who was an incredible friend of the farm.*

- *Alysha Chin*
- *Carol Kirsh*
- *Chizuru Nobe-Ghelani*
- *Catherine Middleton*
- *Miljana Horvat*
- *Kelly Campbell*
- *Jamie Dowsett*
- *Alethia Davis-Hecker*
- *Brooke Filsinger*
- *Michelle Hounslow*
- *Stephanie Assenza*
- *Rodney Yip*
- *Toronto and Region Conservation Authority*