

Common Terms and Definitions

The City of Columbus & Franklin County Local Food Action Plan (LFAP) has embraced a community problem-solving approach to growing food in the City and County. In July 2019 a group of food system stakeholders curated a list of common terms and definitions frequently used to describe growing food in our urban environment.

This list is intended to support community knowledge of and demand for civic agriculture as we work toward achieving the LFAP vision of *“a fair and sustainable food system that benefits our economy, our environment and all people”*.

Civic Agriculture

“A locally organized system of agriculture and food production characterized by networks of producers who are bound together by place. Civic agriculture embodies a commitment to developing and strengthening an economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable system of agriculture and food production that relies on local resources and serves local markets and consumers. The imperative to earn a profit is filtered through a set of cooperative and mutually supporting social relations. Community problem-solving rather than individual competition is the foundation of civic agriculture.” - Thomas A. Lyson, 1999

Urban Agriculture

The activity of growing plants and raising animals (where allowed by zoning and health codes) in and around urban areas. Typically, urban agriculture uses intensive production methods that recycle nutrients and improve soil. Its products are often processed, distributed, and consumed within the same urban area, sometimes within the same neighborhood in which they are produced. Urban agriculture does not include such commercial activities as commercial dog kennels, dog breeding facilities, or livestock sales.

Community Garden

Land that is managed by a public or non-profit organization, an individual, or a group of individuals, and used to grow plants and harvest food or ornamental crops for donation, use by those cultivating the land and their households or sold to support the garden(s). These gardens are generally grassroots movements within neighborhoods that see a need to grow food, create educational opportunities, provide community open spaces, and/or work together for the benefit of the community. The sites may be divided into individual allotments or gardeners may work together to cultivate the entire property.

Urban Farm

A production-focused operation with large or small tracts of urbanized land under cultivation. They grow basic produce (vegetables, fruits, herbs) and, where allowed by zoning and health codes, may house livestock such as chickens or goats. Bees and honey production may also be included. They typically use space-intensive methods of production such as season extension structures, aquaponics, hydroponics, and raised beds. An urban farm may have a for-profit, non-profit, or social economic enterprise model depending on the governing organization(s). Urban farms generally grow food for others and distribute their products locally. Distribution methods may include community supported agriculture (CSA), selling to local restaurants, farmers markets and stands at their farm location.

Composting

Composting is a method of converting organic waste into a nutrient rich soil amendment for use in farming. Organic matter is broken down over several weeks or months aided by inputs such as nitrogen, carbon, worms or fungi.

Farm Stand

A table, stall or tent, in use during the growing season, and operated by a sole vendor for the sale of fresh, unprocessed fruits and vegetables grown by the vendor.
