
National Vacant Properties Conference 2010: Department of Economic Development Poster Display on Urban Gardening Efforts

Ifeoma Ezupue of the Department of Economic Development presented a display that illustrated Urban Agriculture around the City of Cleveland and included the *Gardening for Greenbacks* program that is funded through the Department of Economic Development.

Many of Cleveland's neighborhoods are considered a food desert— there is little access to fresh produce. How can we help change this and provide residents with more choices? The Department of Economic Development's assistance is to assist local urban garden entrepreneurs in starting their urban agriculture businesses. After completing the Ohio State University Extension's *Market Gardener* class, local entrepreneurs who have agreements to sell their vegetables at farmer's markets or to convenience stores can apply for a small start-up loan to purchase tools, market stands, rain barrels, irrigation systems or other capital assets. A total of seven market gardens have been funded to date.

The Program provides grants of up to \$3,000 to local entrepreneurs to purchase capital assets such as: tools & equipment, rain barrels, display tables & booths, farming materials and signage to market their business. Small businesses and entrepreneurs that apply must operate as a "for-profit" entity within the City of Cleveland. The display at the conference illustrated many projects including this success story:

Gardens Under Glass:



The department has funded a hydroponics garden in the Galleria at Erieview called Gardens Under Glass. The small market garden has expanded within one year to include a green house and aquaponics systems to raise fish. They expanded into one of the vacant storefronts in the Galleria to continue their concept of green sustainable urban agriculture.

Gardens Under Glass is a sustainable urban Eco Village located in the Galleria at Erieview. Built in



CITY OF CLEVELAND
Mayor Frank G. Jackson

2010 Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference Highlights

City of Cleveland
Department of Economic Development
601 Lakeside Ave., Room 210
Cleveland, Ohio 44114

1987 in the heart of Downtown Cleveland, the Galleria was designed as a two story retail center and has been transformed into a mixed-use property. It is the ideal location for a project of this nature due to its structural design that provides a year round controlled environment, perfectly conducive to successful implementation. At the project's root is an urban farm that will use a system called "re-circulating greenhouse hydroponics" to grow produce such as: tomatoes, lettuce, herbs, peppers, wheat grass, and flowers. The project utilized the City's Gardening for Greenback's Program to partially fund this new urban gardening venture.