



THREE RIVERS AGRICULTURAL LAND INITIATIVE (TRALI)

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For Immediate Release

TRALI Protects EastField Cooperative Garden in East Liberty Neighborhood

(East Liberty, Pittsburgh, PA) – The Three Rivers Agricultural Land Initiative (TRALI) has officially protected its first community garden, the EastField Cooperative Garden, in Pittsburgh’s East Liberty neighborhood.

“For twelve years, we’ve worked this soil, fostered a community, and shared the literal and metaphorical fruits of the labor from this garden,” garden organizer Gary Cirrincione said. “Permanent protection of the land gives us peace of mind, knowing that this diverse multigenerational place we’ve built can never be taken away.”

A joint venture between Pittsburgh-area nonprofits, Grow Pittsburgh and Allegheny Land Trust, TRALI works to protect urban agricultural lands in perpetuity. EastField was officially protected on December 31, 2019 .

“We’ve had the privilege of helping to supply this garden with materials to grow into what it is now,” Grow Pittsburgh Executive Director Jake Seltman said. “It is both a relief and gift to now be able to promise that all their work will be protected and enjoyed for generations to come.”

The EastField Cooperative Garden has been supported by Grow Pittsburgh’s Community Garden Sustainability Fund, a program to support established gardens in Allegheny County, since 2013. The garden originated as part of the 2009 MOMSGreen project, which included the transformation of two nearby abandoned lots into a children’s natural play space and landscaping at four Sojourner House MOMS properties.

The garden provides opportunities for local residents to grow healthy food, work the soil, and interact cooperatively with their neighbors. Currently there are 38 wood-framed, raised beds; ten of those beds are planted with herbs, greens, tomatoes, and strawberries that are shared by all of the gardeners. There are also several shared fruit trees. All other beds are assigned for individual family use. About 20 families from the [MOMS/Homeless Children’s Education Fund](#) summer camp use the garden site, and garden produce is also shared with 25 more low-income families who live nearby.

TRALI launched in August 2017 with the goal of protecting and preserving selected urban agricultural lands in perpetuity. It will provide long-term security for existing community gardens and urban farms. A future goal is to protect vacant properties that are ideal for agricultural use. The initiative will create the stability necessary to foster a vibrant, sustainable urban agriculture movement in the Pittsburgh region by removing the threat of future sales of agricultural lands for other development purposes and creating opportunity to expand urban agriculture.

“We’re thrilled to apply our tools as a land trust to the job of protecting community-building efforts that connect neighbors and address food insecurity concerns,” ALT President and CEO Chris Beichner said.

Community gardens and urban farms provide environmental benefits including stormwater mitigation, pollinator habitat creation and neighborhood food insecurity reduction, and serve as vital places for social connections and community-building. There are more than 120 community gardens and urban farms in Allegheny County, many of which are using land without a formal land use agreement or have only temporary permission.

Three Rivers Agricultural Land Initiative (TRALI) is a joint venture between Grow Pittsburgh and Allegheny Land Trust that launched in 2017. By utilizing both organization’s strengths, the initiative creates the stability necessary to foster a vibrant, sustainable urban agriculture movement in the Pittsburgh region by removing the threat of future sales of agricultural lands for other development purposes and creating opportunity to expand urban agriculture.



About Grow Pittsburgh

Grow Pittsburgh's mission is to teach people how to grow food and promote the benefits that gardens bring to our neighborhoods. The organization was founded in 2005 and has been a registered 501c (3) entity since 2008. We use growing food as a platform to bring people and communities together, while inspiring them to be healthier individuals, learn new skills, care for the earth and make our city and region a more livable, equitable and desirable place to be. Please visit our website to learn more about the distinct programs and production sites that provide opportunities for people of all ages to grow their own food. More information can be found at growpittsburgh.org.

About Allegheny Land Trust

Founded as a 501c (3) nonprofit in 1993 in response to the rapidly declining amount of green space in Allegheny County, ALT has protected more than 2,600 acres to preserve our region's unique natural beauty, provide accessible outdoor recreational opportunities, improve water quality, sustain biodiversity, and enhance the overall quality of life for all. ALT's strategic priorities are in land protection, land stewardship, community conservation, and nature-based education. More information can be found at alleghenylandtrust.org.

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