

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CT Department of Agriculture: Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

City of New Haven - Food System Policy Division

DATE: March 30, 2021

Funding request: up to \$75,000 over three years

The Food System Policy Division (FSPD) is applying for funding from the CT Department of Agriculture in order to partner with community members and organizations to develop a series of plans and activities that will create an enabling environment for urban agriculture, specifically for specialty crop production and market opportunities in New Haven, so that all residents will equitably benefit from the positive environmental, health, and socioeconomic outcomes of urban agriculture. The FSPD is requesting \$75,000 to expand knowledge, production, and equitable access to specialty crops grown locally in New Haven with three objectives in mind:

- To enhance specialty crop cultivation knowledge in New Haven through urban agriculture education in order to lay the groundwork for a city-wide Urban Specialty Crop Cultivation Certificate Program.
- To increase access to and competitiveness of locally-grown specialty crops by connecting urban producers to culinary professionals and other small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs).
- To establish and support a network of (community-led) seed libraries throughout New Haven, with special consideration of culturally-appropriate seeds and crops.

This three-pronged approach will demonstrate the effectiveness of a cohesive, hyper-local food system in New Haven that sources directly from urban farmers, supplies local restaurants, independent chefs, and other food- and ag-based businesses, and supports stakeholders engaged in local food systems work.