



NUag Impact Snapshot Collaborative Networks for Food Resilience



This impact snapshot is part of the National Urban Agriculture initiative and is based on interviews conducted at the NUag Conference, held August 4-6, 2024, in Detroit. Drawing from multiple participant interviews, we have crafted thematic snapshots to highlight key insights. Overall, 48 interviews were conducted across various participant groups. This particular snapshot amplifies perspectives on collaborative networks and food resilience, focusing on relevance, response, and results.

Relevance

Food resilience requires connected, responsive networks that strengthen local systems and reduce dependence on external supply chains. In urban areas, collaboration among farmers, educators, and agencies bridges gaps in food access and production. The word collaborative appears 23 times, and food 170 times, underscoring their central role. As environmental pressures, economic shifts, and health crises continue to disrupt systems, building collective infrastructure through unified, cooperative efforts are increasingly critical. These efforts are not just beneficial, they are essential for long-term stability and sustainability.

Response

Organizations like Kansas City Black Urban Growers and the Heal Oasis Project are pioneering cooperative efforts to link growers, educators, and health workers into united food networks. These collaborations facilitate mini-grants, shared resources, and training programs. National meetings and federal cooperative agreements have amplified these efforts by providing platforms to strategize and organize. These alliances not only share best practices but help scale food production, support policy advocacy, and align diverse local stakeholders under shared goals.



Results

These collaborations have led to measurable improvements in food distribution, urban farm viability, and local policy influence. In Kansas City, growers report expanded operations and more consistent food access in neighborhoods. Heal Oasis in Denver has created food oases with youth involvement and community healing. Cooperative agreements have increased visibility for local farmers, enabling them to influence urban agriculture zoning and land use policies. As a result, communities have stronger, interconnected systems that better resist shocks and adapt to long-term challenges.



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