Join 40+ partner organizations and community leaders collectively working to develop a cradle to career pathway for food systems careers and entrepreneurship, starting with the establishment of a Youth Farm demonstration project in South St. Petersburg.

What is a Youth-Led Urban Farm?

Empowering youth to lead urban agriculture projects under community guidance and resources has proven to be a successful strategy in youth, workforce, and neighborhood development. Participants from 9th grade through college, start as workers, then become mentors, managers and eventually food systems leaders. They learn through experience, implement real world business principles, serve the local community and also could generate revenue from produce grown at the site.

Youth Farm will include four key components:

- **Entrepreneurship Experience and Training** – Youth will learn essential business skills as they form a business plan, market the produce, sell the produce, and manage their accounts. Workforce readiness includes training in the key soft skills - communication, dressing for success, maintaining a work ethic, etc.

- **Youth Leadership Development** – Empowered to be leaders on the farm, youth will be making daily operational and big picture decisions - serving on steering committees, pitching new ideas, and learning essential leadership and team-building skills.

- **Food Systems Training and Education** – Health and nutrition education involves sustainable urban agriculture experience and training and topical discussions about today’s social and health challenges relating to the food system.

- **Culinary Training** – Youth will learn to prepare nutritious and delicious meals and follow best practices for food safety.
Site for the Youth Farm

The proposed site for the project is a 0.83 acre parcel of City-owned unimproved land owned within the South St. Petersburg Community Redevelopment Area (CRA). The property is northwest of the City’s Enoch Davis Center, a multi-purpose center located adjacent to the James Weldon Johnson Branch Library.

Based on contamination levels present during ongoing environmental assessments funded through the City’s EPA Brownfields Grant, a clean-up of the site will begin August 2019.

How Is This Project Funded?

The City of St. Petersburg, through CRA tax increment financing (TIF), is contributing to youth stipends, land, clean-up, and capital improvements for the project. Additionally, approximately $200k has been awarded to the project from the Foundation for a Healthy St. Petersburg to fund staff positions for 2019 through Spring 2020.

What’s Next?

- The Steering Committee is now being formed and Carla Bristol has been hired as our Collaboration Manager through the Pinellas Education Foundation and housed within the Pinellas County School District.
- A Summer Youth Pilot with 15 youth participants happened June/July, 2019.
- Fall 2019 enrollment now open visit: stpete.org/youthfarm for information and to apply.