



## FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY

**Newark, NJ, October 29, 2025. The Newark Community Food System (NCFS), with over 20 active urban gardens and farms, is actively empowering residents across the City of Newark, to reshape their food system and gain control over their health and environment.**

According to a recent message from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, over 42 million Americans relying on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) will lose their benefits starting November 1, 2025, due to the government shutdown. SNAP, also known as food stamps, is a federal program designed to provide low-income families with monthly benefits to afford nutritious food.

The withdrawal of these essential benefits will not only impact those already in need but will also have significant long-term economic and social repercussions for corporations, institutions, and communities. The fundamental interconnectivity of food with human existence cannot be overlooked. This issue extends beyond marginalized communities and will undoubtedly affect every American, in every state, and every community.

### **The cessation of SNAP benefits will have far-reaching consequences, including:**

- \* Reduced sales for local supermarkets and grocery stores.
- \* Adverse effects on farmers across various regions and states.
- \* A decrease in food imports as demand from SNAP users diminishes.
- \* Increased strain on healthcare institutions due to the direct link between lack of food and illness.
- \* Potential food price increases for non-SNAP users.
- \* Increased food loss and waste (e.g., frozen goods, organic food, dairy) due to decreased sales.
- \* Decreased stock values for major food distributors and producers.

The federal shutdown of food benefits is, in its simplest form, government-sanctioned food apartheid. While a food desert unintentionally limits access to nutrient-dense food in a community, apartheid (whether racial, food, or health-related) is a calculated and purposeful restriction of marginalized communities' access to basic needs, thereby perpetuating systemic health inequities.

While we collectively hope that those responsible for access to these resources will take necessary action for the American people, we stand ready to support our local community. We recognize the role of food in systemic racism, yet we remain committed to advancing locally grown food, which has now become more than just a means to access fresh produce; for some, it is the difference between life and death.



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**Food access is not an option; it is a necessity, a matter of humanity. In Newark, cooperatives of urban farmers and land stewards, food justice advocates, radical educators, scientists, health practitioners, and medicine people collaborate to maximize Adopt-A-Lot farm spaces for food production, education, and climate change remediation.**

Newark Community Food System remains dedicated to creating a sustainable food system. This system, led by BIPOC Newarkers and others, can combat the significant health disparities adversely affecting Newark's youth and adults with your continued support. Now more than ever, we need your voice to empower even more individuals to combat food apartheid and systemic racism.

Our collective strength is why we are initiating a call to action to increase your participation in urban agriculture training, green-business development workshops, culinary and herbal medicine classes, and our engaging festivals, such as the City Wide Garden Tour, to ensure you do not miss out on vital resources!

**Community, your energy, time, and donations are invaluable to us. Please consider supporting Newark Community Food System through your public speaking engagements, service days, and school field trips.**



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## NEWARK, NEW JERSEY FARMS AND GARDENS

Newark SaS  
**Agricultural Hub & Sustainability Center**  
3-7 Fairmount Ave.  
Tobias A. Fox, Managing Director  
Cell: 646.399.0337  
tfox@sasglocal.org  
www.sasglocal.com

KIDS IN BUSINESS®  
**Kinney Community Garden**  
279 W. Kinney St.  
Barbara Weiland, Executive  
Director  
Cell: 862.444.9148  
bweiland74@gmail.com  
www.kidsinbusiness.org

Ironbound Community Corporation (ICC)  
**Down Bottom Farms**  
371-385 Ferry St.  
Shannel Paulino, Community Farmer  
spaulino@ironboundcc.org

Apian Industry (aka Apiary in the Sky, LLC)  
**Labor of Love Farm**  
149 Fabyan Pl.  
Marcellis Counts, Founder-Owner  
Cell: 718.915.6806  
apiaryinthesky@gmail.com

Natural Ground 1  
**The Culture Spot**  
239 Hawthorne Ave.  
Hajjah Dena Corbin, Founder-Program Designer  
Cell: 201.532.9650  
naturalground1.360@gmail.com

**Giving One Tenth Garden**  
715-717 So. 20th St.  
Charmaine La Fortune  
Cell: 917.301.7501  
givingonetenth@gmail.com

**Rabbit Hole Farm Newark**  
36-38 Rose Terr.  
Keven Porter, Executive  
Director  
Cell: 973.477.9914  
rabbit.hole.farm@gmail.com

**Plant It Nursery**  
119-121 Columbia Ave.  
Melissa Leuthner, CEO  
Cell: 347.834.2252  
Plantitnj@gmail.com

STEAM Urban  
**A Healing Sanctuary**  
179 Broadway  
Fallon Ayaan, Founder-CEO  
Cell: 678.651.9778  
info@steamurban.org

Green Garden Bunches  
**The Zubi Garden**  
179 So. 10th St.  
Ijeoma Ukenta, Director  
Cell: 973.818.3375  
Greengardenbunches@yahoo.com

Price Institute, Rutgers-Newark  
**Healing Garden**  
49 Bleeker St.  
Alexander Chang, Facilitator  
priceinstitute@newark.rutgers.edu

**Plot It Fresh Community Garden Program**  
Greater Newark Conservancy  
32 Prince St.  
O.A. Cole, Program Steward  
P. 973.642.4646 ext. 204  
C. 862.373.5114  
Cole@greaernewark.org

Al-Munir Farms:  
**Jannah On Grafton**  
29 Grafton Ave  
Eden's Farm  
42 Elizabeth Ave  
Bilal Walker, Founder  
O: 908.666.6357  
walker.bilal973@gmail.com

**Healthy Havens HOV**  
69 Norwood Street  
1068 18th Avenue  
Melissa Leuthner  
Cell: 347.834.2252  
Plantitnj@gmail.com

Urban League of Essex County  
**MLK Community Garden**  
(corner of 8th St and Central Ave)  
Dr. Michele Scott, Manager  
Cell: 973.493.8926  
mscott@ulec.org