BALTIMORE EDIBLE ORCHARDS
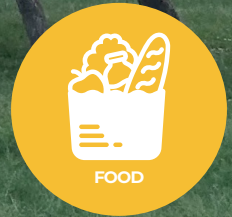
SINCE 2012 | BALTIMORE, MD | THE BALTIMORE ORCHARD PROJECT

MARYLAND

CITY

FOOD

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND faces a food crisis, with a quarter of residents living in a "healthy food priority area," lacking fresh, nutritious, and affordable food.[1] These healthy food priority areas are most prevalent in low-income neighborhoods and disproportionately affect people of color.[2] Having limited access to healthy food causes many negative health outcomes, including higher risk of diabetes, obesity, and shorter life expectancy.[3]

Rabbi Nina Beth Cardin founded the Baltimore Orchard Project in 2012 to harness the power of fruit trees to improve the lives of city residents.[4] Since then, the Baltimore Orchard Project has planted over a thousand fruit and nut trees in nearly 100 orchards across the city (see map on reverse).[5] These trees provide communities with a variety of social, economic, and environmental benefits. They reduce air pollution, store carbon dioxide, cool homes and nearby areas, mitigate storm water runoff, boost mental health, improve aesthetics, reduce crime rates, and more.[6]

Edible orchards also create a supply of fresh produce. To date, the Baltimore Orchard Project has harvested nearly 25 thousand pounds of produce.[7] Much of the bounty is donated to food pantries and the Real Food Farm's Mobile Market, allowing food insecure residents to enjoy fresh fruits and nuts. The "Funky Fruit Initiative" and "Mulberry Madness" programs reduce food waste by increasing community acceptance of unusual or misshapen fruit that would otherwise be overlooked and go uneaten.[8]

In addition to planting and harvesting, the Baltimore Orchard Project hosts regular adult education workshops; the annual "Orchard Stewards Program" trains individuals on how to properly tend orchards.[9] In 2014, an orchard staff member and public school teacher coordinated to form the first public school Orchard Club, and an on-going partnership with the Baltimore City Public School System provides youth education programs.[8]

Through its various partnerships and programing, the Baltimore Orchard Project instills a shared sense of community and creates life-long environmental stewards.

PROJECT GOALS

· Improve food security
· Build intercommunity and intracommunity ties
· Increase urban forestry canopy
· Display co-benefits of trees
· Reduce flooding and runoff

VALUE OF BALTIMORE'S TREES

Baltimore's 2.8 million trees contribute $159.6 billion in co-benefits, as one tree can provide $57,000 in benefits over its lifetime.[10]

Blocks wind and shades buildings, reducing energy costs $3.3 million a year

Stores 527 tons of carbon dioxide, valued at $10.7 million a year
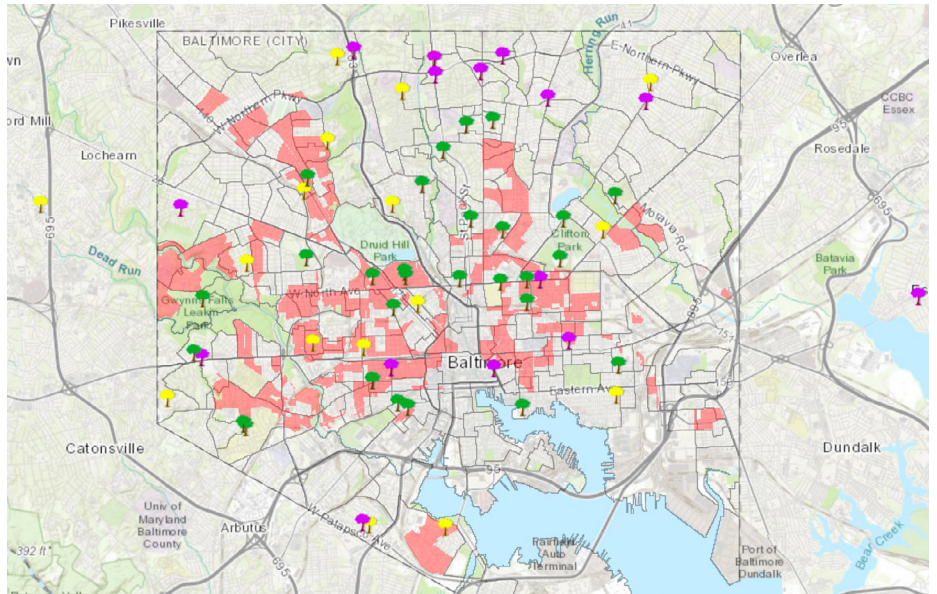
Removes 700 metric tons of air pollution, saving $3.8 a year

Civic Works

BALTIMORE ORCHARD PROJECT

CLIMATE INTERACTIVE

BALTIMORE ORCHARD PROJECT TREE PLANTING LOCATIONS[8]

- 🌳 Community
- 🌳 Congregation
- 🌳 School
- Food desert

LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

The Baltimore Orchard Project began as a stand-alone organization from 2012-2015 and transitioned to become a Civic Works program in 2015. It receives funding from multiple government agencies and non-profits.[7] With the help of local non-profits such as Blue Water Baltimore and Baltimore Green Space, the Baltimore Orchard Project works with schools, congregations, and community groups to design small-scale orchards that fit the groups' needs as well as the space available. Volunteers and AmeriCorps members plant and maintain the fruit trees, all of which are supplied by TreeBaltimore.[11]

BUSINESS
City Scapes (D, I)
Local Restaurants (I)

GOVERNMENT
TreeBaltimore (C, F, I)
Baltimore Gas & Electric (F)
Office of Sustainability (C)
Department of Public Works (C)

SOCIAL MISSION
Civic Works (A, C, D, E, I)
Baltimore Green Space (I)
Abell Foundation (F)
Parks & People (I)
Blue Water Baltimore (I)

ACADEMIA
Johs Hopkins Center for a Livable Future (I)

A: Advocacy, C: Champion, D: Design, E: Evaluation, F: Funding, I: Implementation

REPLICATION

In 2006, the USDA Forest Service conducted a first-of-its-kind mapping analysis of Baltimore's tree canopy, allowing researchers to examine the health of individual trees as well as how coverage is correlated to social indicators.[12] The novel approach was replicated in i-Tree, a suite of tools used globally.[13] i-Tree can provide insight into the linkages between tree location and crime rates, health outcomes, neighborhood income, and racial demographics. Non-profit organizations and governments can utilize i-Tree to identify the places of highest need and best suitability for starting their own edible orchards.
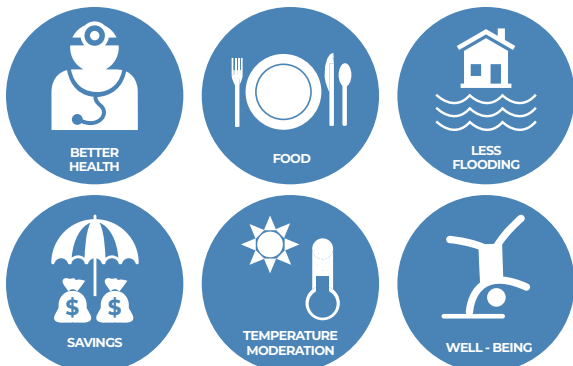
More than fifty edible orchard programs exist in both rural and urban communities.[14] Notable cities include: Atlanta, Georgia; Seattle, Washington; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.[15]

CLIMATE AND RESILIENCE BENEFITS

CLIMATE BENEFITS
- CONSERVE ENERGY
- CONSERVE RESOURCES
- SEQUESTER GHGS

RESILIENCE BENEFITS
- BETTER HEALTH
- FOOD
- LESS FLOODING
- SAVINGS
- TEMPERATURE MODERATION
- WELL - BEING

OTHER BENEFITS

- **FOOD & WATER**
- **JOBS & ASSETS**
- **HEALTH, WELLBEING, & SAFETY**
- **CONNECTION**
- **ENERGY & MOBILITY**
- **RESILIENCE**

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Civic Works

BALTIMORE ORCHARD PROJECT

CLIMATE INTERACTIVE

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