

San Francisco Raises the Bar on Urban Ag

by Paul Towers

On April 20, 2011, San Francisco became the first major city in the United States to change its zoning to foster more urban farming and to enable the legal sales of produce and goods from urban gardens and farms. This effort was led by the [San Francisco Urban Agricultural Alliance \(SFUAA\)](#), which was co-founded by former [Pesticide Watch Education Fund/California Food Project](#) organizer Elizabeth Martin-Craig last summer. The SFUAA, with over 40 member organizations and farms, was originally formed to bring together local urban farmers and gardeners, food policy people, and community members interested in advocating for local food access.

When [Little City Gardens](#) co-founders, Caitlyn Galloway and Brooke Budner, found they could not legally sell their produce from their three-quarter acre farm in San Francisco, the SFUAA began their popular campaign to amend the zoning code to expand where different types of gardens are permitted, and to allow for the commercial sale of produce grown on-site. "We firmly believe that market gardens like ours can fit into the fabric of residential neighborhoods," explained Little City Gardens co-owner Caitlyn Galloway. "With this new ordinance, we can finally start selling what we grow to our neighbors and restaurants in the City. We look forward to being able to test the viability of a small urban farming business here in San Francisco."

"The Urban Agriculture Ordinance will allow for greater local food production within City limits," said San Francisco Mayor Edwin Lee. "This legislation will not only help support our community through the increased production of fresh, locally grown produce, but will also revitalize vacant arable land and create green jobs."

The newly amended zoning code sets an important precedent for the region and country as cities lobby their local governments to allow for greater flexibility with urban gardening and farming, and provide their residents with local and non-toxic food options.