

**New Directions Housing Corporation
Louisville, KY
California Collaborative Urban Farmette Demo
Budget: \$3,000**



After the local health department designated their neighborhood a food desert, [New Directions Housing Corporation](#) (NDHC) and three other members of Louisville, Kentucky's California Collaborative neighborhood organization teamed up this summer to transform 18 tons of rich earth into a 10-bed urban farmette community garden.

NHDC Assistant Director Lisa Thompson says, "Health [was] being compromised because family leaders [couldn't] easily find fresh fruits and vegetables in the neighborhood." She says residents are using the new garden to "reclaim community history" in an area that once grew its own food in World War I-era victory gardens.

Youth from the collaborative's Young Money group have been especially active in maintaining, harvesting and distributing the garden's produce. They have already grown enough food to share with their families, the local food bank and the project's donors. They even had enough left over to sell vegetables at the local farmers market.

Thompson says the collaborative "envisioned the farmette to be a place where residents can network, connect and learn about organic gardening." After seeing the demonstration garden's success, the collaborative is now scouting sites for more urban farmettes in the neighborhood. The group also plans to host cooking classes so that residents can learn how to prepare their fresh vegetables.

The California Collaborative has also been active in pursuing funding for broadband internet capacity and in providing photography, jewelry design and drawing programs for youth. Along with these and other initiatives, Thompson says the urban farmette is helping the collaborative realize its vision of "a green and wireless community with a vibrant arts beat."

