



**Teens for  
Food Justice**

# **SCHOOL-BASED URBAN AGRICULTURE AS A VEHICLE FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Presented By:  
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# Webinar Outline

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**03.**

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**05.**

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**02.**

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**04.**

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**06.**

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## **We believe in the power of our youth to lead us to a food-secure future.**

[A] big part of making our food system a more just and equitable one is to uplift voices that are sometimes lost and hidden in the midst of what we usually think of as the bigger and more powerful voices... like our politicians and our government officials and...reclaiming that power back as people of our communities [that] we too can make change

**- *Teens for Food Justice Alumna***

# Renae Cairns

## Advocacy and Community Engagement Manager



I am committed to working at the intersection of community-based agriculture and equity.

I joined Teens for Food Justice (TFFJ) in February 2020 and have since collaborated with our internal staff, teachers, students, and community partners to lift up youth voices in the food justice movement.

Prior to joining TFFJ, I worked with various food, farm and education-based non-profits, small-scale sustainable farms, and food businesses.



### **Introduce yourself in the chat:**

Name | Organization or Program | Location | Email (optional)

# Key Terms



01

## Food Justice

A holistic and structural view of the food system that sees healthy food as a basic human right and addresses structural barriers to that right.

02

## Food Security

All people, at all times, having physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious foods that meet their food preferences and dietary needs for a healthy and active life.

03

## Youth-led

When young people are involved in decision making throughout the entirety of a project, initiative, or program. 1 in 8 youth are at risk for experiencing hunger and thus should be active leaders and decision makers in developing just and equitable solutions.

# Our Vision & Mission



## Vision

To build a just food system for all.

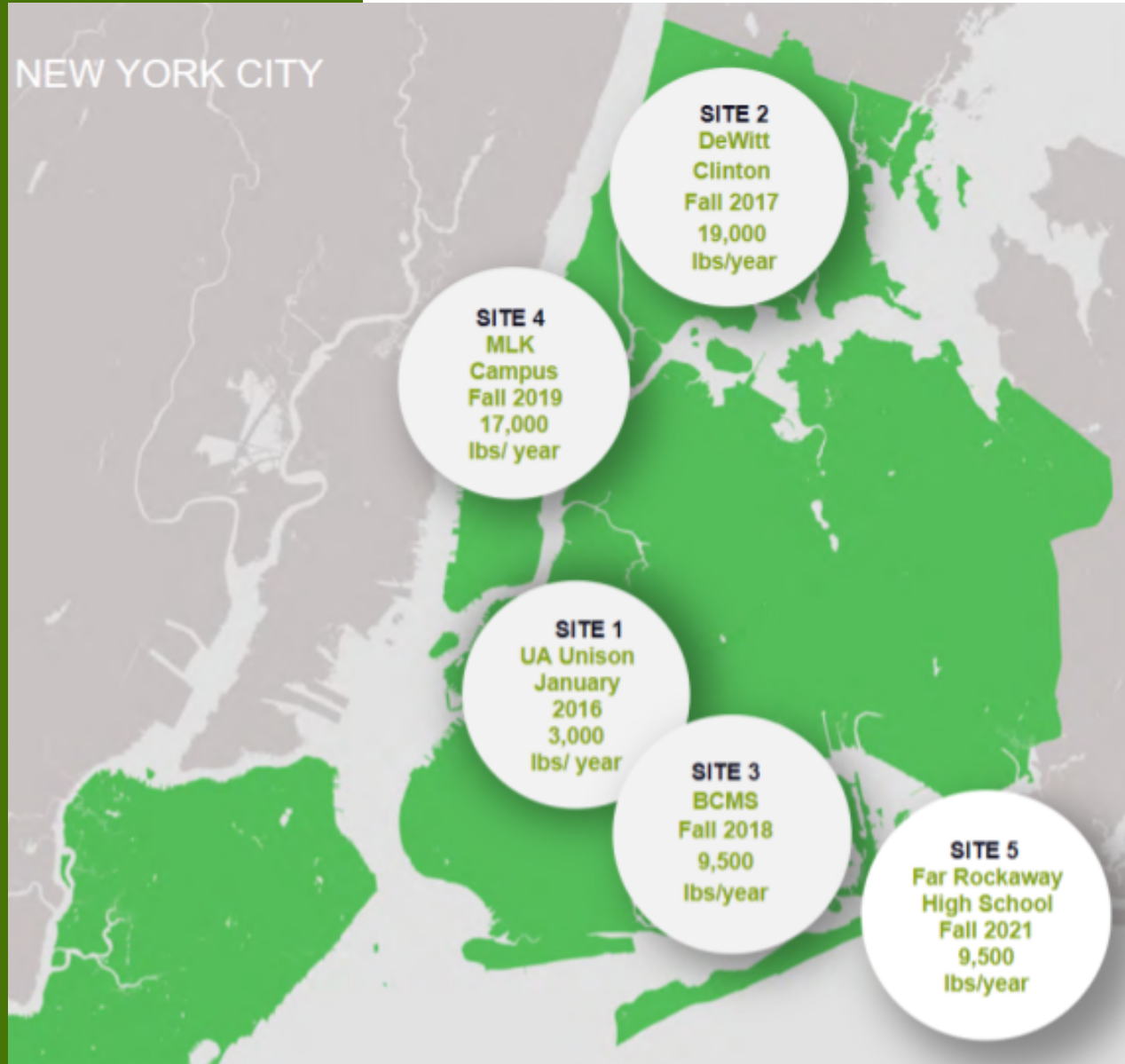
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## Mission

TFFJ is catalyzing a youth-led food justice movement to end food insecurity in one generation through high-capacity, school-based hydroponic farming.





Who We Are

# Our Model



## Nourishing Minds

Hands-on sustainability and STEM curriculum.

## Nourishing Bodies

Immersive food and nutrition education alongside growing for school meals.

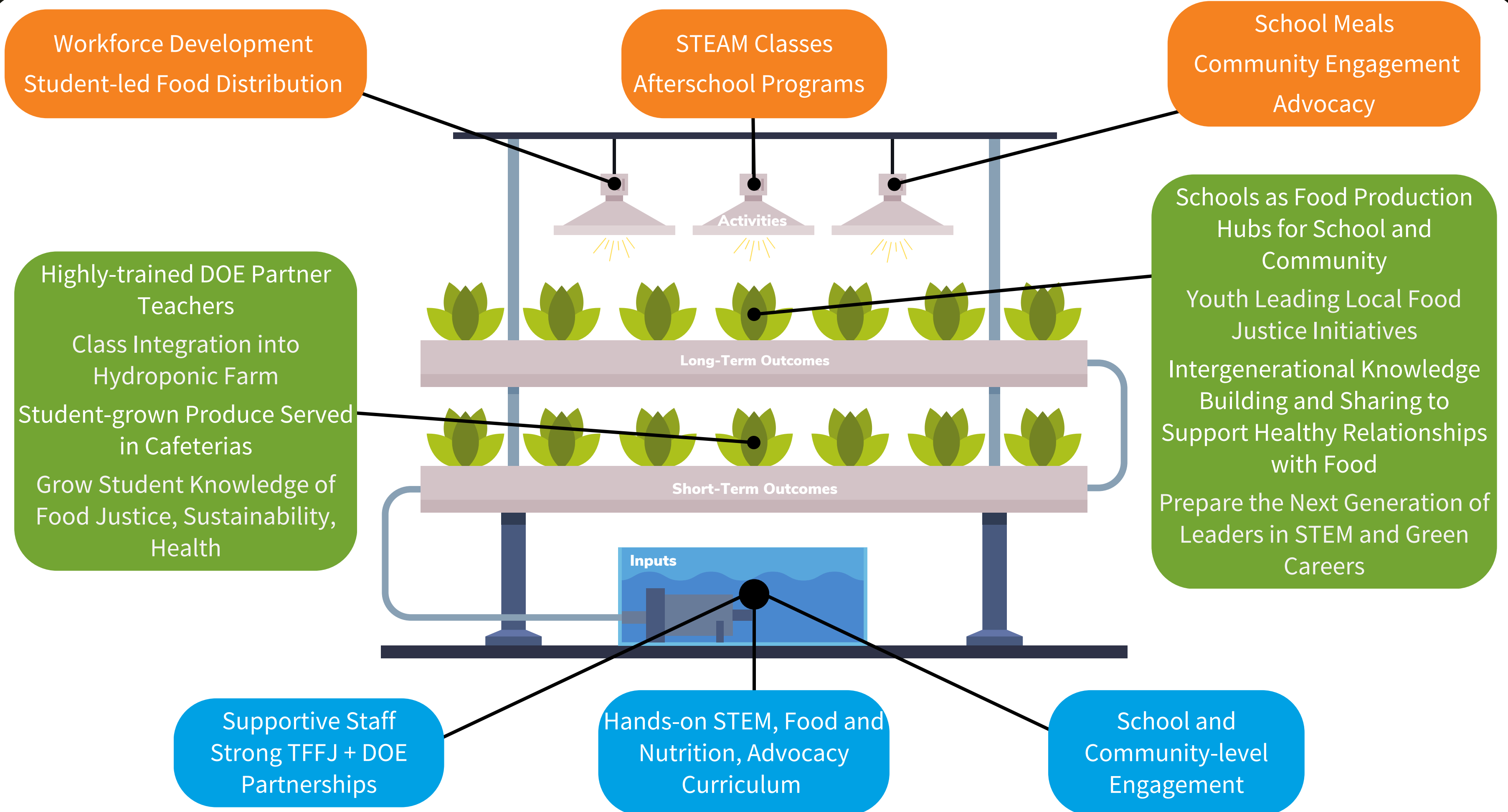


## Nourishing Communities

Food distribution to students and families, partnerships with local CBO's, students as food and health justice advocates.







Workforce Development  
Student-led Food Distribution

STEAM Classes  
Afterschool Programs

School Meals  
Community Engagement  
Advocacy

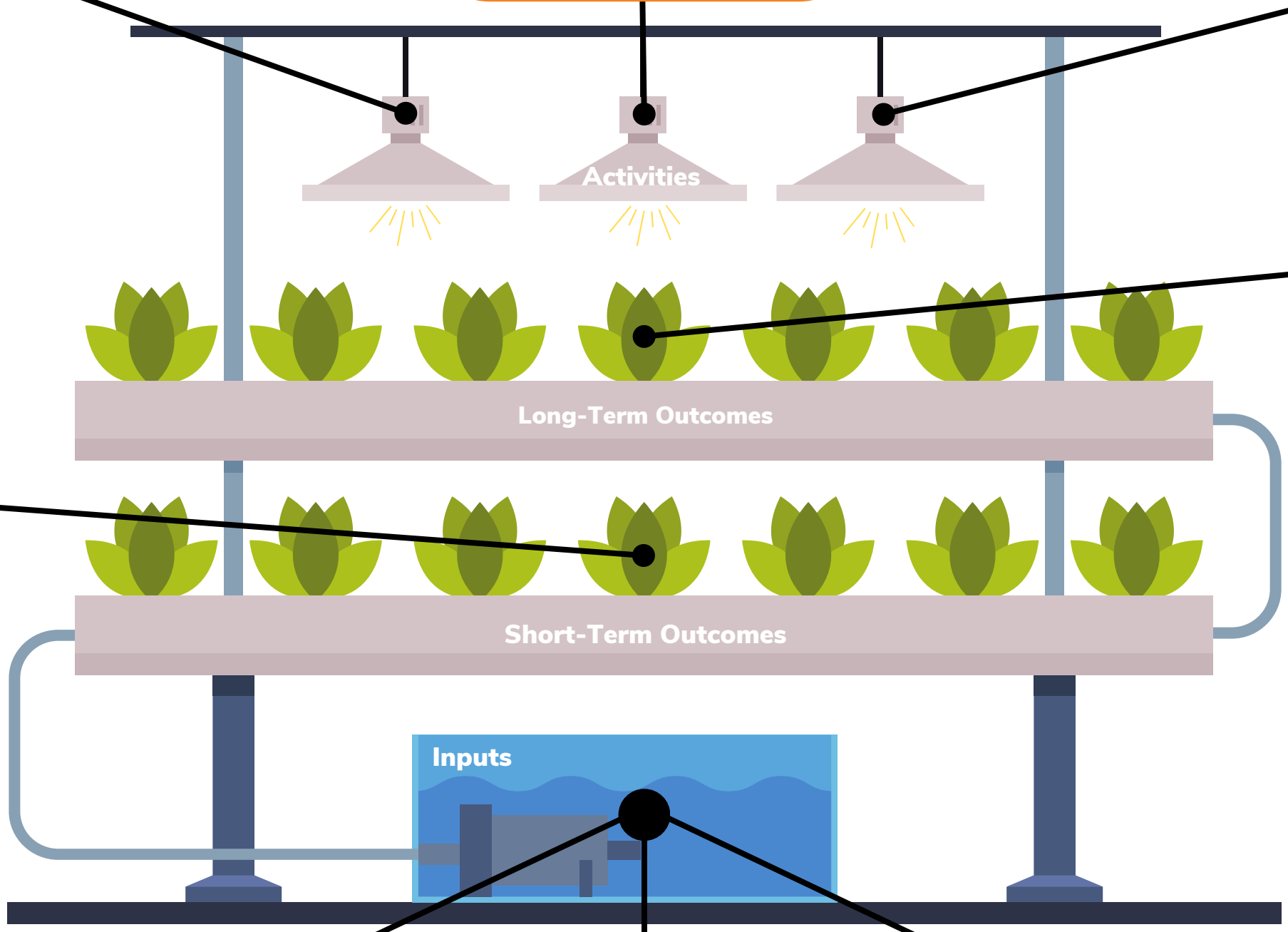
Highly-trained DOE Partner Teachers  
Class Integration into Hydroponic Farm  
Student-grown Produce Served in Cafeterias  
Grow Student Knowledge of Food Justice, Sustainability, Health

Schools as Food Production Hubs for School and Community  
Youth Leading Local Food Justice Initiatives  
Intergenerational Knowledge Building and Sharing to Support Healthy Relationships with Food  
Prepare the Next Generation of Leaders in STEM and Green Careers

Supportive Staff  
Strong TFFJ + DOE Partnerships

Hands-on STEM, Food and Nutrition, Advocacy Curriculum

School and Community-level Engagement



# The Case for School-based Urban Agriculture Education



1 Youth make up 16% of global population

2 Youth are among the most impacted by current crises

3 Voter turnout of young people is consistently lower than other groups

3 2 out of 3 countries DO NOT include youth in their policy development processes

4 Schools can function as community hubs

5 Teens are already food decision makers at home - family impact

6 Youth who take leadership roles within their community tend to remain civically engaged

6 Including impacted populations in program, policy and project development increases efficacy



To learn more about the information on this slide, please refer to:

1. [YOUTH and the 2030 AGENDA for SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORLD YOUTH REPORT. 2018.](#)

2. ["Davos Lab: Youth Recovery Plan." World Economic Forum, 12 Aug. 2021.](#)

3. ["#YouthStats: Public and Civic Participation." Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, June 2015,](#)

[www.un.org/youthenvoy/political-participation/.](http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/political-participation/)

4. [Horn, Michael, et al. Schools as Community Hubs: Integrating Support Services to Drive Educational Outcomes. Sept. 2012.](#)

5. [Waxman, Elaine, et al. BRINGING TEENS to the TABLE: A FOCUS on FOOD INSECURITY in AMERICA. 2015.](#)

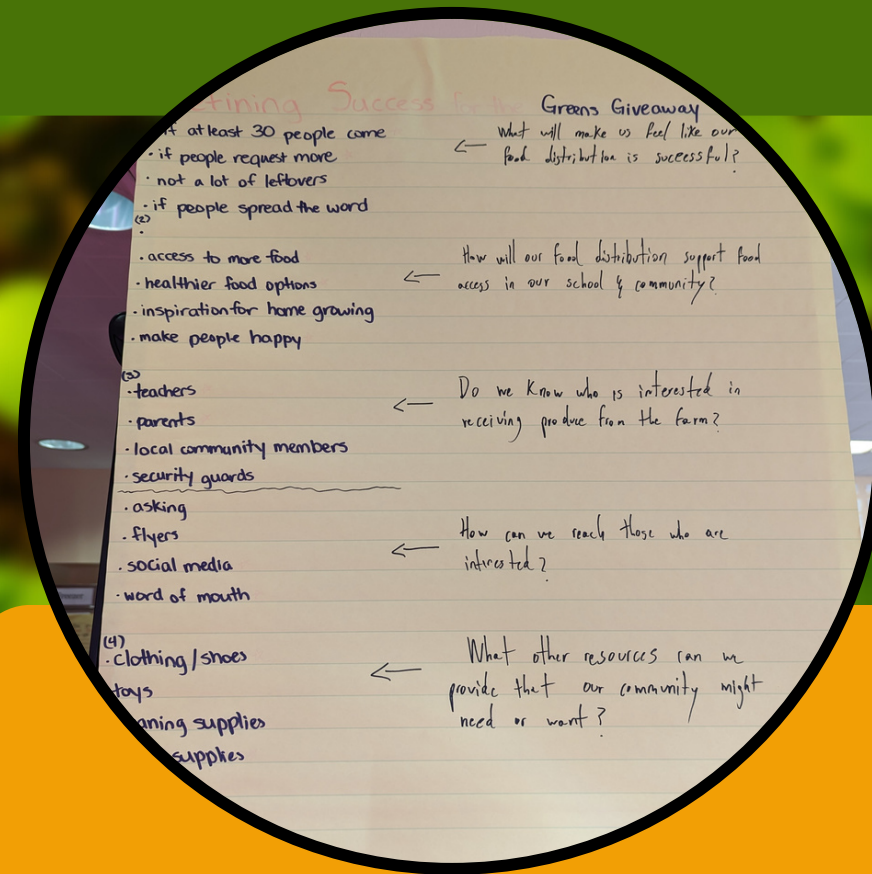
6. [Ballonoff Suleiman MPH, Ahna, et al. "Youth Action for Health through Youth-Led Research." Journal of Community Practice, vol. 14, no. 1-2, 25 Sept. 2008.](#)

# School-based urban ag as vehicle for community engagement: Community and Family Food Distribution at Far Rockaway High School



## Hands-on Programming

Students become experts in hydroponic farm technology and situate farm as a community resource.



## Student-identified Issue

Through context-building, research and design, students create a project or initiative to address an issue impacting their community.



## Community-based Solution

Students implement their project and engage in ongoing evaluation and innovation through community engagement and feedback.

# School-based urban ag as vehicle for community engagement: Intergenerational Knowledge-Building and Sharing



## Hands-on Programming

Students develop and taste test new recipes through food and nutrition education programs at school.



## Intergenerational Engagement

Students take home produce, recipe ideas and share with parents and families.



## Integrate New Ideas

By extending program opportunities through and beyond the school walls, students lead new program innovations and integrations.

# School-based urban ag as vehicle for community engagement: Growing Community Leaders



## Pathways to Leadership Positions

Create opportunities for highly engaged students to take on meaningful roles within the program and organization.



## Training and Mentorship

Connect with aligned community partners for further training, mentorship and skill building.



## Civically Engaged Youth

Students grow into youth leaders engaged in policy advocacy, peer mentorship and engaged community members.

# THANK YOU



# Q&A

A hydroponic grow room with multiple levels of plants under artificial lights. The plants are growing in black trays on metal shelving. The room is filled with green leafy plants, and the lighting is bright and even. The floor is made of brown tiles.

**LEARN MORE &  
EXPLORE**



**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

# Let's Connect!



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