



DETROIT BLACK FARMER LAND FUND
- ANNUAL REVIEW -

LIVING LEGACY

JUNETEENTH 2020-2025

DETROIT BLACK FARMER LAND FUND

CELEBRATING 6 YEARS OF LAND JUSTICE, BLACK FOOD SOVEREIGNTY & COLLECTIVE POWER

As we mark six years of the Detroit Black Farmer Land Fund (DBFLF), we're reflecting with love, pride, and deep gratitude. Since stepping into the role of Director in November 2024, Gabrielle "Gabby" Knox has been entrusted with carrying forward the collective vision of our founding members, awardees, land stewards, and programs with community partners. Together, we've grown not only in numbers but in depth—building the infrastructure, relationships, and tools needed to advance long-term Black land ownership and food sovereignty in Detroit.

The DBFLF Leadership Committee, which includes Mama Jerry Hebron (Co-founder), Tepfirah Rushdan (Co-Founder), Patrice Brown, Dr. shakara tyler (Co-Founder), Angela Lugo-Thomas, Danielle Daguio, and Mama Erin Preston Johnson (Co-Founder). These leaders—each deeply rooted in Detroit's Black farming and food justice communities—are shaping our path forward with clarity and care. Even as DBFLF named its first employee and Director, Gabby, the committee continues to be involved through ongoing committee work. Their presence in strategy sessions, monthly meetings, outreach, decision-making, and application support grounds Detroit Black Farmer Land Fund in the foundation that this is a living, breathing project of collective care and vision.

One of the most significant shifts this year was the transition of our fiscal administrative responsibilities from one of our co-founding organizations, Keep Growing Detroit (KGD) to the Detroit Black Community Food Sovereignty Network (DBCFSN). This move brings the Fund under Black-led fiscal management and aligns our daily operations with our mission of food sovereignty. It's important to note that both KGD and Oakland Avenue Urban Farm remain active, vital members of the founding DBFLF coalition—continuing to lead, organize, and advocate for our city's Black growers.

In January 2025, we also launched our Legal and Business Services Program in collaboration with the Detroit Farmers Collective. This pilot has supported ten farmers with services like grant writing, title searches and clearing, business planning consultations and revisions, nonprofit fundraising planning, and tax preparation. These services address long-standing barriers faced by Black farmers and lay the groundwork for stronger, more sustainable farm operations. We're proud to report this program will continue into the summer and beyond as we continue to secure funding.

We took time this year to rework our application process, prioritizing community consensus and clarity through significant edits to our application — streamlining the process and incorporating years of feedback from farmers, land consultants, and reviewers. We wanted to make sure the application was accessible, values-aligned, and clear. With community at the center, we strengthened our eligibility criteria, added transparent scoring, and clarified accountability expectations. To help applicants navigate the updated application, we hosted an Application Tour at various Detroit public Libraries across the city of Detroit.

A project that reflects our commitment to collective ownership is the Grow Moore Produce Cooperative—an awardee-led group that continued to expand this year. In 2025, they formalized as a nonprofit and grew their impact through produce aggregation, food box distribution, and market partnerships. Grow Moore is a living example of cooperative economics, mutual support, and Black agricultural resilience.

We also continued our work as part of the Detroit Community Composting Collective Project (DCCP), where we will play a central role in recruiting Black farmers, advocating for equitable land use, while advocating for a more sustainable future through composting pilots across the city. Alongside our partners Detroit Food Policy Council (DFPC), DBCFSN, Oakland Avenue Urban Farm, Sacred Spaces, and Sanctuary Farms, this project represents a larger vision for community-powered waste solutions that center environmental and racial justice. Looking ahead, we remain committed to nurturing a thriving, interconnected Black farming community.

Our roots are deep, our network is strong, and our vision is clear.

To all our supporters, awardees, reviewers, land consultants, funders, and co-founders—thank you. Thank you for believing in this work, for staying in the fight, and for continuing to plant seeds with us. Let's keep building.

-With love and solidarity, The Detroit Black Farmer Land Fund



DETROIT BLACK FARMER LAND FUND

DETROIT BLACK FARMER LAND FUND IS CO-FOUNDED ON JUNETEENTH 2020 BY



Oakland Avenue Urban Farm



LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE



dr. shakara tyler saba, DBCFSN,
Co-Founding Fund Stewards



Erin Preston Johnson, DBCFSN,
Co-Founding Fund Stewards



Jerry Hebron, OAU, F,
Co-Founding Fund Stewards



Tepfirah Rushdan, City of Detroit,
Co-Founding Fund Stewards



Danielle Daguio, KGD,
Lead Co-Conspirator



Angela Lugo-Thomas, KGD,
2024-2025 Leadership Committee



Patrice Brown, City of Detroit,
2024-2025 Leadership Committee



Gabrielle Knox, theJOYproject,
2024-2025 Director

COMMUNITY EXPERTS



Sherri Smith,
BlackFarmFinder.com

(App Development)



Amanda Brezzell,
Fennigan's Farm

(Social Media)



Brenda Foster,
Foster Patch Community
Garden

(Land Consultant)



Travis Peters,
Green Thumbz
Consulting

(Land Consultant)



Tiffany Pilson,
Red Flower Growers

(Land Consultant)



Tanya Stephens,
Detroit Vacant Land
CDC

(Land Consultant)



**DETROIT
BLACK
FARMER
LAND
FUND**

431 APPLICANTS

**ALL BLACK FARMERS & CHANGEMAKERS
WHO SOUGHT TO OWN THE LANDS
THEY'VE TENDED OR COMPLETE
INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS**

2020 - 2025 DETROIT BLACK FARMER LAND FUND AWARDEES



293 AWARDS

**DISTRIBUTED & SUPPORTED
THROUGH THE PROCESS OF OBTAINING
LAND IN THEIR NAME OR COMPLETING
INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS**

BLACK LAND OWNERSHIP

THIS YEAR AWARDEES RECEIVED FUNDS TO PURCHASE LAND
AND/OR COMPLETE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS TO EXPAND
THEIR FARMS/GARDENS

97

AWARDEES
ARE NOW
LANDOWNERS

31

ACRES OF LAND
PURCHASED BY
AWARDEES

27

AWARDEES
CURRENTLY IN
THE PURCHASE
PROCESS

125

AWARDEES
COMPLETED
INFRASTRUCTURE
PROJECTS





**DETROIT
BLACK
FARMER
AND FUND**

54

AWARDEES

**NUMBER OF BLACK
FARMERS IN
DETROIT**

**WE WILL TO
AWARD & SUPPORT
IN 2025-2026**



WAYS TO SUPPORT

- MAKE A FINANCIAL DONATION!
- DONATE GENTLY USED EQUIPMENT TO BLACK FARMERS!
- VOLUNTEER YOUR SERVICES & TIME TO BLACK FARMS!
- DONATE LAND!



LEARN MORE AND SUPPORT AT

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BLACK

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.COM