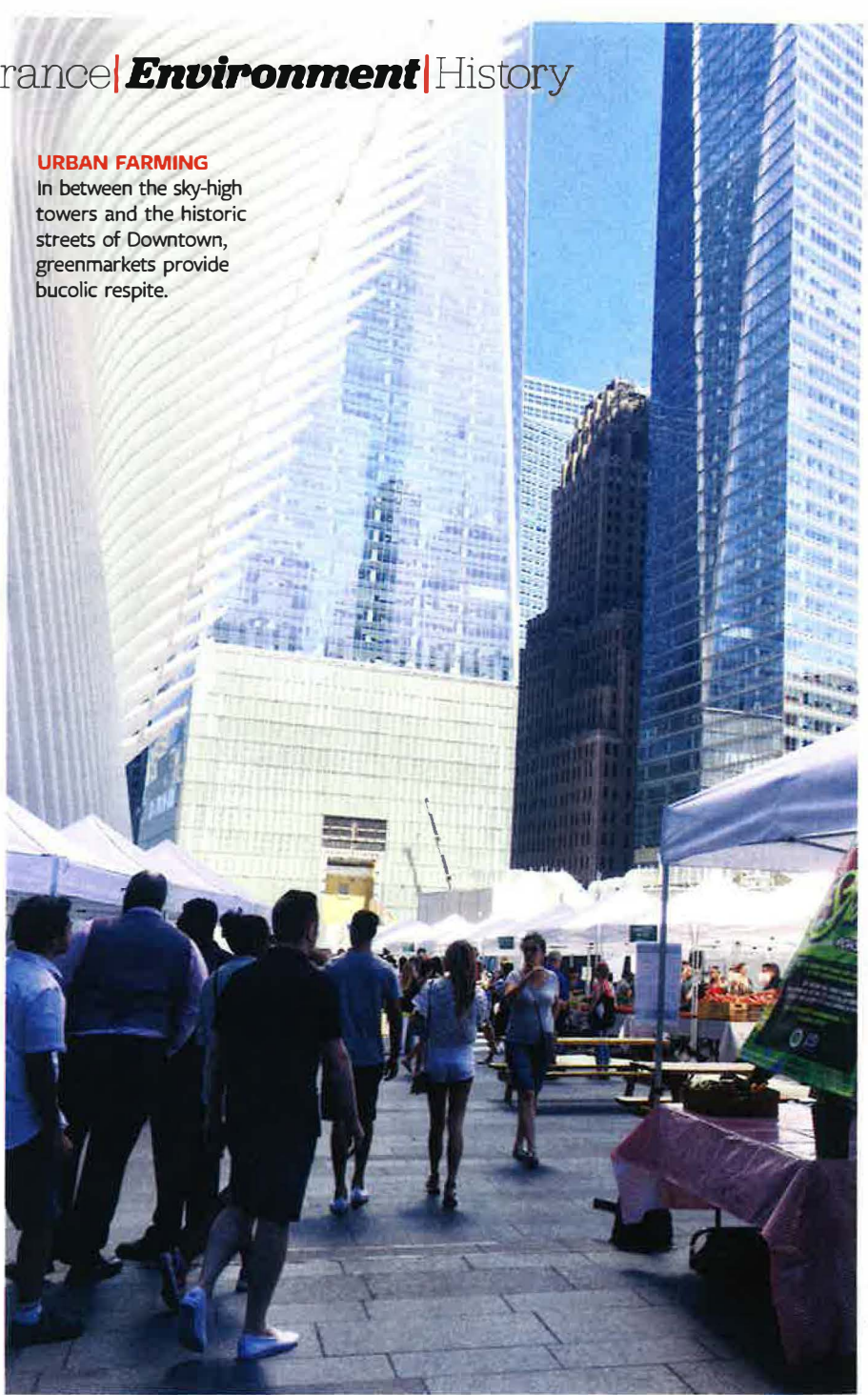




**URBAN FARMING**

In between the sky-high towers and the historic streets of Downtown, greenmarkets provide bucolic respite.



# FOOD *for* THOUGHT

*New York City is a buffet of **GREEN INITIATIVES**; here's how to get involved.*

By Catherine McVay Hughes

**L**iving in our great city means living in the beating heart of the global networks of commerce, science, and the arts. These networks enrich our lives as we play our part on the world stage; and New Yorkers celebrate living and working in this vibrant epicenter. In this city of foodies and entrepreneurs, we think constantly about where our food comes from, and the purity of our water. In fact, New York City has committed \$1 billion to making sure that New York's "city gin" - widely touted as the "champagne of drinking water" - remains clean and pure. But as New Yorkers, we are always looking for ways to make these networks stronger, more resilient, and more accessible to all our fellow citizens.

Big, dense cities like New York outpace the rest of the country in sustainability; by escaping suburban sprawl, we use more mass transit and burn less fossil fuels, and high-rise life means we

use energy more efficiently. New Yorkers know that we can do more. Here are some ideas to help us enjoy this city to its fullest, while making sure the networks that support our lives here continue to thrive and prosper.

**Shop at your greenmarket**

GrowNYC has created a network of greenmarkets so all New Yorkers can access the freshest, healthiest local food. Downtown Manhattan has three year-round greenmarkets in TriBeCa, City Hall and Bowling Green, and seasonal markets with locations including the Oculus at the World Trade Center and Water Street Greenmarket at Coenties Slip. Locally sourced food means local jobs, preserves precious open space, and keeps family farmers on their farmland. It also decreases the distance that food travels. Bonus: some markets have cooking classes so you know what to do with all that kale.

### **Skip the plastic straw and bottle**

New York City's water system moves over a billion gallons a day, nearly all of it unfiltered, and continued investment aims to keep it that way. The Last Plastic Straw "strives to educate the public about the absurdity of single-use plastic, its effects on our health, our environment, and our oceans," and they "aim to eliminate from the source, the use of single-use plastic."

### **Green your kitchen**

Buy produce with no or little packaging to prevent excessive trash and recycling. Although plastic and paper containers not contaminated by food can be recycled, it is best to avoid packaging entirely, buying in bulk or using reusable grocery and produce bags, according to the NY League of Conservation Voters.

### **Compost**

Almost a third of the waste that the NYC Department of Sanitation collects is food scraps, spoiled food, food-soiled paper, yard trimmings and plants. Instead of throwing away organic waste as garbage, you can separate it for composting. This waste happens at every stage of the journey from farm to fork, sending millions of pounds of food to rot in landfills and releasing methane, a highly potent greenhouse gas.

### **Educate yourself**

Take a cooking class in Battery Park City at the Institute of Culinary Education (ICE), which offers a diverse range of classes including cooking seasonal food that you buy at the local greenmarket. There are also classes for seniors offered through the Battery Park City Authority or local community centers.

### **Vertical urban farming**

TriBeCa's two-room hydroponic farm supplies top chefs Downtown and around the city through its basement herbary, Farm.One. This year-round farm supplies unique herbs and greens and fills the gap for locally sourced leafy greens during the winter. Research for Farm.One started in April 2016 by growing products at The Institute of Culinary Education. Soon it had its first client, Daniel Boulud, and the first crop was sold out.

### **Volunteer and make friends**

NYC is home to some great local farming, gardening, and composting opportunities, such as Battery Park City Parks Conservancy Horticultural Volunteers Program and Liberty Community Gardens, Governors Island GrowNYC Teaching Garden, and Randall's Island Urban Farm and Earth Matter NY - Compost Learning Center. These are not only great ways to get involved - they're also fun social activities.



### **GREEN IS GOLD**

Besides delicious seasonal fruits and veg, the city's greenmarkets provide social and educational opportunities.

