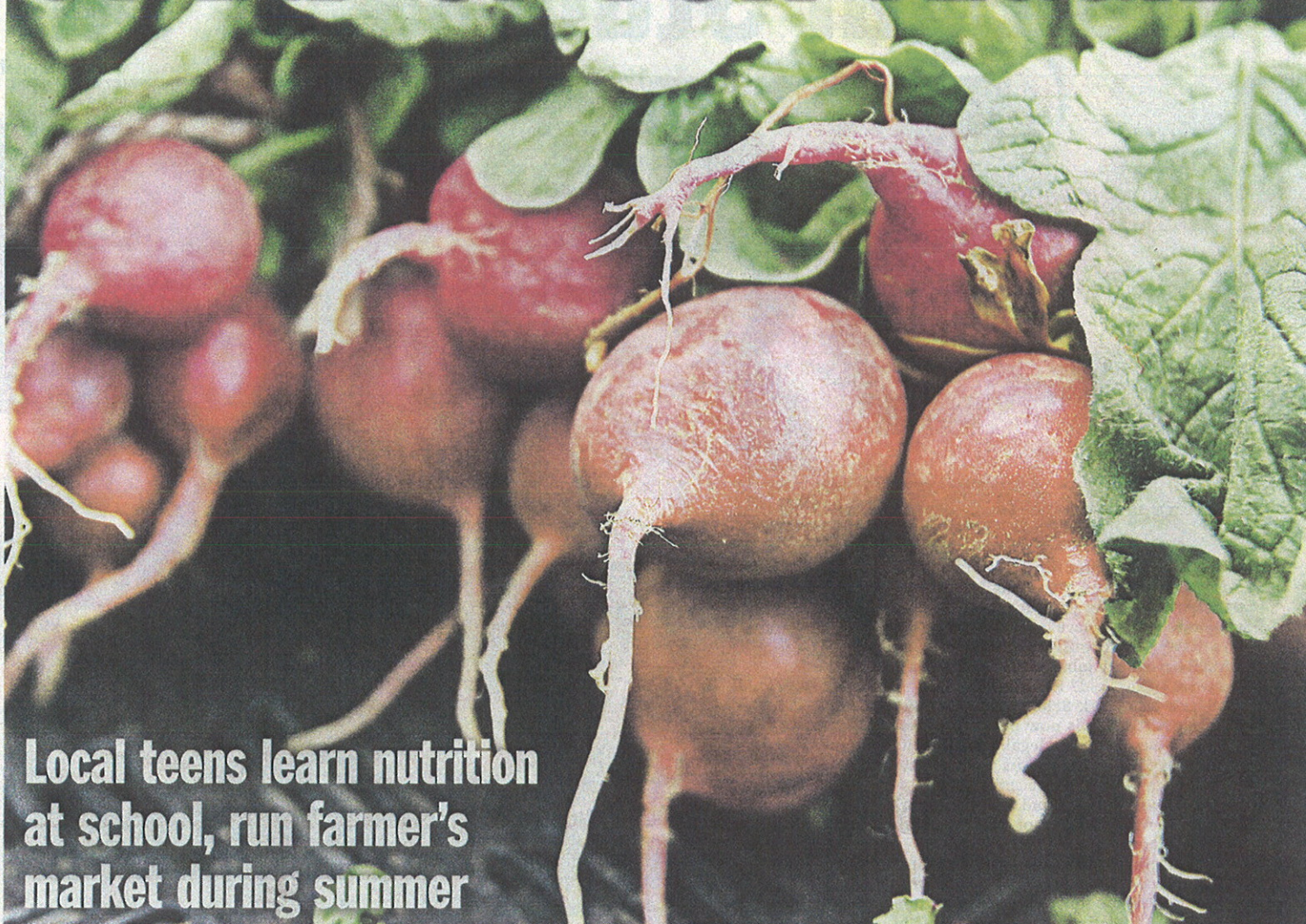


STAND UP FOR VEGGIES



Local teens learn nutrition at school, run farmer's market during summer

BY TANYANIK SAMUELS
PHOTOS BY VICTOR CHU

FOR MORRISANIA residents, the annual youth-run farmer's market on Boston Road near 169th St. is like Christmas in July.

"When we first started, it was amazing how people found us," said David Saphire, who oversees the market. "Now they really look forward to us coming every year."

The Youthmarket runs from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Wednesday, through Oct. 27, offering a host of veggies and fruits, including locally grown lettuce for \$1, cherries for \$2.50 a pound and corn at three ears for \$1.

Now in its third year, the market is part of GrowNYC, a nonprofit that operates a network of urban farm stands citywide.

During the school year, GrowNYC runs the Learn It, Grow It, Eat It program to teach teens about nutrition.

"We want to make them more aware about the fats and sugars they consume, especially in the fast foods or junk foods they like to eat," said Saphire, project director for the program, which is in four South Bronx high schools.

During the summer, students work as interns, running the Youthmarket, hosting gardening workshops and teaching educational forums for the community.

The program has become a way for local teens, like Yibo Marin, 18, to give back.

"I like that I can help my family and people who live around me live a better lifestyle," he said. "I feel like I'm helping them make better life choices."

For Genesis Tejada, 18, one of the best features is that the market accepts food stamps.

"A lot of people who have food stamps usually only buy junk food," she said. "But now they have an opportunity to buy stuff that's fresh and healthy for them."

tsamuels@nydailynews.com



Interns (l. to r.) Nioluis Vargas, Franchesca Ceballos, Chabel Sanchez and Dennis Palacios cook up corn at Morrisania Youthmarket, which is run by teens as part of GrowNYC program.



GrowNYC intern (top photo) weighs peppers for customer at Youthmarket in Morrisania while organization's Kate Grace Mitchell (above) demonstrates how to make mint tea. Shoppers throng market at Boston Road near 169th St. for fresh goodies at great prices including corn, cherries, radishes and locally grown greens. The eight youth-run urban farm stands in the city are in neighborhoods with few sources of fresh fruits and veggies.