



GrowNYC's FARMroots provides aspiring and established farmers with business technical assistance and training designed to ensure the long-term viability of farms and farmland

Black History Month: Dr. George Washington Carver by Gabby Pereyra

February is **Black History Month**. As a recent immigrant, I learned that the history of the African diaspora is rich and of great importance to this country. Thus, every month is Black History Month.

February gives us the opportunity to emphasize the work of trail blazers who paved the road we walk on today. Here I would like to emphasize the work Dr. George Washington Carver.

Dr. George Washington Carver was born into slavery and went on to become a scientist. Through his work in the early 1900s at Tuskegee University, he improved the lives of impoverished farmers in southeastern Alabama, using chemistry and scientific methodology.

Carver's research gave us the tools to move away from monocropping cotton by rotating crops with soil-enriching crops, like legumes and sweet potatoes. By codifying the use of crop rotation in combination with the planting of nitrogen-fixing legumes, Carver taught us how to regenerate soil. His system was known as regenerative soil biology.

He also developed hundreds of **new products**, especially for peanuts, creating a market for this inexpensive soil-enriching legume. At the time, not many people ate sweet potatoes and peanuts. Similarly, Carver developed traveling schools and other outreach programs to educate farmers. He published popular bulletins that reported on his research at the Agricultural Experiment Station and its applications, and distributed these to farmers for free.

More than one hundred years ago, Dr. Carver was teaching us about sustainable agriculture and the importance of regenerate systems that feed us. Those are valuable lessons for today's agricultural systems. But, in my opinion the most important legacy from Carver is that through farming and conviction, he raised the standard of living of his fellow farmers.

You can read more about Dr. George Washington Carver's legacy [here](#).



George Washington Carver standing in a field, probably at Tuskegee, holding a piece of soil, 1906.

Photo: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Frances Benjamin Johnston

Ramps: Symbol of Appalachian Culture and Seasonal Farming

Ramps (also known as wild leeks) are a celebrated wild plant food and symbol of Appalachian culture. The ramp community spans from growers and harvesters in rural communities to chefs and consumers in cities across the east coast.

Ramp's importance as a seasonal food item and growing commercial trade is not well known. For this reason, **Penn State University researchers** are gathering information about ramps to better understand the importance of this plant as a forest resource and agricultural item in the region. Better documentation would help inform the development of better extension support for this emerging industry.

If you sell ramps, please help the Penn State University researchers by taking [this survey](#).



Resources

Job Opportunities

[Farm Tournant](#) is hiring for a full-time farm crew member

[Randall's Island Park Alliance](#) is looking for an Urban Farm Manager

Request for Expressions of Interest

The City of New Rochelle owns a historic but deteriorating barn within a large public park, and they are hoping to partner with a person or organization who might work with them to rehabilitate the structure and utilize it for sustainable agriculture or related purposes.

There is more their Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) [here](#).



Conference/Grants

March 19, [NOFA-NJ 2019 Annual Meeting](#), Duke Farms, Hillsborough, NJ

March, 21- April 4, CSA Fair in: [Beacon](#), [Kingston](#), [Troy](#), [Rhinebeck](#), [Hudson](#)

Smart Farming. [The Labor Ready Farmer Project](#) is offering grants to provide up to 12 hours of Technical Assistance (TA) consulting services to those who want to make improvements to their farm's processes in hiring, training, managing or evaluating employee
Application instructions: [click](#)

Webinars/Classes

Feb 27, [Developing an Effective Farm Employee Handbook](#), from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

March 8, [Whole Farm Management with FarmOS](#), from 12:30 PM to 1:00 PM

March 18, [Introduction to the Soil Health Benchmark Study](#), from 12:00 PM to 12:30 PM

Starting on March 16, [Amazing Tomatoes Class](#): From seed to fruit and everything in between by Rise & Root Farm

Workshops/Courses

Feb 28, [Land Access Training- Leasing and Purchasing Land](#), NJ Department of Agriculture, Trenton, NJ

March 5, [Turning the Corner: Transitioning from winter to Spring](#), Braddock Farms, Braddock, PA

March 7, [Building a Farm Marketing Plan](#), Glynwood, Cold Spring, NY

[Two-Day Grant Writing Basics Workshops](#):

March 14-15 Rochester, NY

[here](#)

Recorded, [Keynotes from the 39th EcoFarm Conference](#): Empowering our Communities to Transform the Food System, by [Malika Bishop](#), [Denisa Livingston](#), and [Karen Washington](#)

GrowNYC's FARMroots Program is offering one scholarship to a participant in FARMroots' Beginning Farmer Program to attend the 6 weeks class at Rise & Root Farm. To apply, please complete [this application](#)

March, 26-27 Albany, NY
[Produce Safety Alliance Grower GAPs, FSMA and Food Training courses](#):

March 6, Carlisle, PA
March 21, Landenberg, PA
(Training Language: Spanish)

[Support GrowNYC](#)

FARMroots is a program of GrowNYC, a 501(c)3 environmental nonprofit organization.

When you donate to GrowNYC you support FARMroots, neighborhood Greenmarkets, small family farms, food access programs, community gardens, recycling and hands-on education programs for youth.

[Please donate to GrowNYC today.](#)



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