

Greetings Everyone,

Spring has only just begun and already there is much to talk about, quite apart from the heartwarming weather. The Lansing Urban Farm Project (LUFPP) has been busy upgrading its home field and expanding its programming. Here's a brief summary of what's been growing on.

1. Electricity has come to the home field, thanks to a grant from the Greater Lansing Food Bank and individual donations. We can now operate the hoophouse vents, run the coolers, and keep the lights on after dark. This is a major step forward as we work toward creating an up-to-date urban farm. Our next infrastructural projects will be repairing the large walk-in cooler that has served as little more than a lawn ornament and designing a multifunctional packing shed. We are being assisted in these tasks by Nate Kermiet and Aliza Ghaffari, two remarkable urban farmers (more about them below). Anyone out there know about condensers and refrigeration systems?
2. The LUFPP has four new board members, and each one brings special talents and energy to our non-profit. They are Tony Hermann, owner-operator of Snappy Veggies on Lansing's Southside; Leeni Shetha, a community and family services advocate and fundraiser; Jane Whitacre, a food and health systems diva and grant writer; and Sam Bigley, a community organizer and beginning REO Town farmer. Check them out on our website - [LUFPP Board | LUFPP](#)
3. LUFPP is the focus of MSU's RCAH 326 class on civic engagement and community education. Over the winter, students have researched LUFPP's history and programs as well as interviewed board members and surveyed Lansing Grown farmers to better understand how to improve communication within the organization and beyond. They are creating a short video and an informational flyer for us to use publically. Both of these tools address the value of urban food and farming and highlight the work of LUFPP and Lansing Grown. Less showy but no less important, students have recommended a new platform for internal and farmer communications. Thank you RCAH 326!
4. Aliza and Nate, of Magnolia Avenue Farms, are back again this year. Their farm is now officially an LLC as it expands its production and programs from a "lemonade stand" to a self-sustaining enterprise. This year they will launch an online store, which will make it easier to make direct sales to customers as well as to other vendors, grocers, and restaurants. They will also offer a "farmers choice" box – a more flexible CSA-type arrangement. Starting in late April you can reach out to them at [farmersweb.com](#). In the meantime, you can follow them at [\(20+\) Magnolia Farms | Facebook](#) and read more about their thoughts on local food demand during a pandemic here: [Did the pandemic help the farming industry? One Lansing farmer says yes. \(fox47news.com\)](#)
5. It's not too early to think about a Harvest Gala. So, mark your calendars (at least tentatively). While it's impossible to know how the COVID pandemic will play out this year, the LUFPP Board is optimistic about hosting a Harvest Gala fundraiser on Saturday, September 11, 2021. Just what it will look like is not yet clear. Perhaps it will involve a food truck or a Lansing Grown meal. It will undoubtedly be masked and distanced. We will know more (and will report back) by the end of June 2021. Stay tuned.

And that's the news so far this spring. Thank you, as always, for your interest in urban agriculture in general and LUFP in particular. You can find more agriculture news here: [Learn more about Urban Agriculture | LUFP](#)

Eat well, be well, and continue to advocate for local food and farming.