

# Sen. Johnson: Rep. Goyke, Sen. Johnson unveil “Wisconsin Urban Farming Futures” legislation

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**MADISON** - Today, Wisconsin State Representative Evan Goyke (D - Milwaukee) and Wisconsin State Senator LaTonya Johnson (D - Milwaukee) unveiled their “Wisconsin Urban Farming Futures” legislative initiative at the Kaleidoscope Gardens in Milwaukee.

“The fields of urban farmers look very different than the dairy farm my grandfather owned. Urban Agriculture offers a modern expansion of one of Wisconsin’s strongest traditions and can literally transform urban communities. In Milwaukee, we’ve seen new life spring from the ashes of old industry and today announce our package of legislation from a vacant lot where an abandoned home was torn down,” said Rep. Goyke.

The “Wisconsin Urban Farming Futures” initiative consists of several pieces of legislation that promote and elevate the field of urban farming, which is a key part of Wisconsin’s future agricultural economy and agriculture community. Specifically, the legislation accomplishes four goals:

- 1. Creates within DATCP an Office of Urban Agriculture to help support those interested in urban farming and those individuals currently operating.
- 2. Requires DATCP to develop and promote programs to support urban farming.
- 3. Requires the identification of land in Milwaukee’s 30th Street Industrial for the future degree offering “Wisconsin School of Urban Agriculture.”
- 4. Provides construction funding for the future “Wisconsin School of Urban Agriculture.”

This package of legislation is supported by The Institute for Urban Agriculture and Nutrition (IUAN), an area multi-sector cooperative that fosters academic, community and civic collaborations focused on advancing urban agriculture and nutrition. This legislation is also supported by Hunger Task Force, the Milwaukee Food Council, and the Victory Garden Initiative.

“There is a growing movement towards urban farming, notably right here in Milwaukee. Urban farming is a community-oriented and concrete solution for Milwaukee residents and their families, given that much of the Northwest portion of the city is ideally suited for urban farming both regarding available space and the need for fresh food and produce. This legislation initiates significant neighborhood involvement and ensures fair and equal opportunities for urban farmers to gain resources that not only grow the economy, but also grow the community,” stated Sen. Johnson.

Legislators and stakeholders in Wisconsin hope efforts like the “Wisconsin Urban Farming Futures” initiative will help our state join others across the country that are investing in urban farming, working to eliminate urban food deserts, encouraging entrepreneurship, and creating new workforce opportunities for those interested in agriculture.

“The expansion of urban farming offers positive economic activity, brings diverse communities together, and offers healthy access to quality food. Wisconsin’s agricultural future rests in the hands of future farmers, including those right here in the City of Milwaukee. Our legislation opens pathways and resources to urban farmers to expand and thrive in Wisconsin and carry forward our tradition of agriculture,” concluded Rep. Goyke.

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