

Urban Farming in Calgary

How to Plan and Grow



1. URBAN FARMING IN CALGARY

1.0 Introduction

Urban farming brings many benefits to cities. It can contribute to local food security, greener neighbourhoods, a stronger local economy, and more resilient communities. The City of Calgary (“The City”) supports urban farming and wants to see it grow. Urban farms thrive when they are well planned, compliant with regulations, and thoughtfully integrated into their surroundings.

Growing food for sale or donation is different from gardening, and understanding the rules, operational considerations, and best practices can help projects succeed, avoid delays, and build positive relationships with neighbours and partners. Getting from an idea to growing typically takes 1-2 years. This guide offers a roadmap to help turn good ideas into great farms that contribute positively to communities across Calgary.

1.1 Purpose

The Urban Farming in Calgary guide is for organizations and entrepreneurs who want to grow food for charitable use or donation or to sell in Calgary. It provides guidance on starting and running an urban farm, including City rules, permitting and approvals, operations, and best practices.

This guide is focused on navigating regulatory requirements and planning projects that are viable, compliant, and sustainable over time. It is for general information purposes only.

1.2 What is urban farming?


Urban farming is the growing, processing, and distribution of food within the city for charitable or commercial purposes. Urban farming in Calgary can take many forms, from community-led projects and charitable food programs to social enterprises and commercial operations. While growing food at a larger scale is possible in Calgary, it is much more challenging than gardening and involves many different considerations including regulatory and legal requirements.


1.3 Who is this guide for?

This guide is intended to support various types of groups and organizations that are interested in urban farming:

 **Community groups:** Community Associations, cultural groups, faith-based organizations, and neighbours can grow food together to build connections, support food security, and create spaces for learning and gathering.

 **Schools and institutions:** Schools, childcare centres, post-secondary institutions, and health facilities can use urban farming to teach science, sustainability, nutrition, and culture with hands-on experience.

 **Non-profits:** Non-profit organizations may use urban farms for activities such as food security, newcomer support, Indigenous food sovereignty, or youth programs. Urban farming can provide skills training, cultural connection, and access to culturally diverse, healthy food.

 **Commercial operators:** Entrepreneurs and farmers can supply food to local charities, markets, restaurants, and residents, creating jobs and supporting Calgary’s green economy.





2. WHERE TO GROW

Finding and securing suitable land is a critical step in establishing a successful urban farm.

2.1 Growing on private property

Food can be grown for non-commercial purposes including personal consumption, sharing or donation on any private property you own or lease. This is called 'Urban Gardening'. Approvals from The City are only required if you are making certain changes to the property (see **Section 4. REGULATIONS, PERMITS, LICENSES & APPROVALS** for details).

Growing food for sale can only take place in specific areas per the rules of Land Use Bylaw, and must always have approvals from The City (see **Section 4. REGULATIONS, PERMITS, LICENSES & APPROVALS** for details). Growing food outdoors for sale is called 'Urban Agriculture' and growing food indoors for sale is called 'Food Production'.

2.2 Growing on City-owned land

The City of Calgary makes appropriate City-owned land available for **Urban Gardening** and **Urban Agriculture** in community partnerships through the [*Farm the City*](#) program. This program supports growing on vacant and underutilized City-owned land to support local food resilience, enable opportunities for community building and volunteerism, and create greener and more vibrant neighbourhoods. To support long-term stability and sustainability, the program works with partners interested in long-term projects (five years or more).

Accessing City-owned land requires entering into a community benefit agreement that defines how the project will bring improvements to the local area. Registered non-profit organizations may be able to lease City-owned land at a nominal (very low cost) rate. Other groups may lease City-owned land at market rates. The [Farm the City program](#) only provides access to land and does not provide funding or in-kind support.

The Farm the City process involves:



Highfield Farm greenhouse, Calgary.



2.3 Choosing a site

Regulations determine where different kinds of urban farming projects can be located, but it is also helpful to think about the local context and how your project fits with its surroundings or community. Look at nearby land uses and proposals for future developments that might impact your project. Consider how your project might affect neighbours, especially in residential areas.

Sites should be easy to reach by walking, wheeling and public transit, and must provide vehicle access and parking. Sites that already have water service and other utilities will be much easier and more cost effective to develop.

Being close to suppliers and services can save money and help things run smoothly. Look for easy access to stores, storage, equipment rentals, and waste disposal. For commercial projects, think about how close you are to customers and retail spaces.

Consider pairing your project with compatible uses. Putting an urban farming project near schools, community centres, food hubs, or food-related businesses can open doors for teamwork, learning, and sharing resources.

2.4 Soil contamination

Soil quality is an important consideration for anyone growing food. Soil can be contaminated by current or historical lands uses on a given site (e.g. gas station, rail yards, etc.). These potential concerns should be considered as part of your urban gardening project. It is your responsibility to ensure that soil conditions are suitable for gardening at your chosen location.



3. BEST PRACTICES

Running a successful urban farming project involves a lot more than just knowing how to grow food, and urban farming is very different from gardening. This section highlights some best practices that can support urban farmers in creating viable and sustainable long-term projects.

3.1 Setting objectives

It is essential to clearly establish the objectives of an urban farming project before starting any planning or designs. Objectives guide decisions about site selection, layout, infrastructure, and programming, ensuring that the project meets its intended purpose. Objectives may include providing fresh produce to the emergency food sector, enhancing community engagement, creating educational opportunities, supporting environmental sustainability, or generating employment. By articulating goals at the beginning, you can prioritize resources, measure success, and design a site that effectively balances productivity, accessibility, and community benefits. Clear objectives also help communicate the project's vision, build support, and guide long-term maintenance and adaptation.

3.2 Being a good neighbour

Urban Farming projects are expected to be positive additions to the neighbourhoods where they are located by providing benefits to the local community and minimizing nuisances. The following sections provide guidance on design and operations strategies that can help make your urban farm a good neighbour.



3.2.1 Buffers and fencing

Buffers help urban farms fit into their surroundings by creating appropriate transitions between growing spaces and the community and supporting good relationships with neighbours. Buffers help to define the site and reduce noise, visual impacts, odours, and other potential nuisances from urban farming activities.

Buffers can be landscape features like berms, hedgerows, naturalized spaces, or ornamental gardens. These features can provide many additional benefits like providing habitat for beneficial wildlife, retaining moisture in the landscape, and supporting soil fertility.

Fencing is not required around urban farms but may be appropriate for use as a buffer. Low, partial, or see-through fencing can define the space and manage access without feeling closed off. Solid or tall fences may be appropriate where there is need for privacy or security. If fencing is used, make sure it is functional, looks good with its surroundings, minimizes risks to wildlife, and meets [*City rules*](#).

3.2.2 Site security

Security helps protect people, plants, and equipment while keeping the space welcoming. Security measures should match the site's location and community context, and balance safety with openness. Where risks of vandalism or theft are high, consider restricted site access, visitor logs, lockable sheds, and motion-activated lighting. Inspect the site regularly and adjust security as needed for seasonal changes or new risks.



3.2.3 Wildlife

Urban farms are part of a larger ecosystem where people, plants, and animals interact. While some wildlife is beneficial to farms, unmanaged interactions can create nuisances for neighbours, pose safety risks, or spread disease.

To reduce problems, avoid attracting animals like deer, rabbits, rodents, raccoons, bears, and stray cats. Common attractants include open compost bins, fallen fruit, water sources, and unsecured garbage. Use closed, rodent-proof bins with tight lids for waste and compost. Pick up fallen fruit and do not leave harvested produce outside. Fencing, row covers, or netting may also be needed to keep wildlife out.



3.2.4 Signage

Well-designed signage can help urban farms to smoothly integrate into their surrounding neighbourhoods. Welcoming signs support engagement and community trust by explaining the purpose of a project, who manages it, what activities are taking place, and how to learn more. Signage should also provide any relevant safety information including site rules and emergency contacts. Signs should not block views, stick out into public walkways, or have lights that bother neighbours.

Certain types of signs require a Development Permit. Signs that do not require permits must still follow the City of Calgary's [*signage bylaws*](#).

3.3 Community support

Community support is important for the long-term success of urban farming projects. Successful projects match the needs and values of the local community and make sure that residents understand and support the use of the space. Involving the community early helps build trust, encourages participation, and can reduce conflicts later. Ideally, the site should offer tangible benefits to local residents. Things like fresh produce, learning and skill-building opportunities, green space for recreation, more attractive community spaces, or more environmental value can help build local community support. When people feel a sense of shared ownership and respect, urban farming can strengthen social connections and become a valued part of the community. For some projects, formal public engagement may be a requirement to get planning approvals.

3.4 People

Urban farming projects rely on the effort of the people involved and will require significant time commitment from volunteers or paid staff. A reliable and engaged team is essential to keep a project productive and resilient. In addition to time spent working the soil, projects may require significant investments of time for administration activities such as business planning, permitting and approvals, financial management, recruiting and training, marketing, logistics, and compliance and reporting.



3.5 Business plans

Business plans are an important tool for any commercial project and can also be helpful for non-profit or community projects. A business plan explains goals, target markets, production capacity, operating costs, and expected revenue. It helps growers prepare for challenges, find opportunities, and make informed decisions about resource use. Business plans can also support applications for loans, grants, or investor funding.

Key parts of a business plan include:



1. **Market analysis:** Understanding demand, pricing, and competition.



2. **Production planning:** Estimating crop yields, labour needs, and infrastructure.



3. **Financial planning:** Tracking costs (such as labour, supplies, equipment, rent), projecting revenue, and finding break-even points.



4. **Risk management:** Considering insurance, crop failure, and climate risks.



5. **Marketing and distribution strategy:** Planning sales channels such as on-site sales, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs, markets, or partnerships.

3.6 Experiential capital

Experiential capital refers to the knowledge, skills, relationships, and institutional memory that urban farmers build over time, strengthening both individual growers and the broader urban growing ecosystem. It encompasses training and mentorship opportunities that develop technical skills and adaptive capacity, as well as collaboration with peers and community partners that foster shared problem solving and innovation.

By engaging in workshops, hands-on learning, networking events, and partnerships with organizations such as schools, nonprofits, businesses, or governments, growers gain access to expertise, resources, and support systems. This collective experience and institutional knowledge builds credibility, enhances resilience, and helps integrate urban farming more deeply into the community.

3.7 Funding and financing

Starting an urban farming project will require funding for start-up costs and ongoing operations. The City does not provide funds to support urban growing projects. Commercial projects may qualify for business loans. Non-commercial projects can look for grants from governments or community organizations. Other options include crowdfunding, sponsorships, and partnerships with local businesses or non-profits. Some funding programs may require matching funds, progress reports, or meeting environmental or social standards.

3.8 Third party certification

Getting certified by independent organizations can show that urban farmers care about the environment and ethical production practices. These certifications confirm that a project complies with specific standards, like organic production, sustainable resource use, or fair labour practices. Certification is optional, but it can make your project more trusted by restaurants, markets, and other buyers, and help share your values with the community. Before applying, think about the costs and changes you might need to make, and decide if it fits your project's size and goals. Even if you do not get certified, using well-known best practices and being open about them can build trust with partners and customers.



4. REGULATIONS, PERMITS, LICENSES & APPROVALS

When starting an urban farming project, you need to think about rules, regulations, and any permits or licenses you might need. Rules governing urban farming help keep people safe, protect the environment, and make sure projects fit well in their neighbourhoods. What you need for permits and licenses will depend on what you are growing, how big your project is, and where it is located. The rules and regulations are the same for both City-owned land and private property.

The following sections outline the basics, but additional regulatory requirements may apply depending on the nature and scope of your project and are your responsibility to identify and follow.*

4.1 Land use (Zoning)

Calgary's [Land Use Bylaw](#) (1P2007) sets the rules for how land can be used and developed. Every property has a land use district (zoning) that lists what activities are allowed there.

Growing food for personal consumption or to donate (Urban Gardening) is considered 'landscaping' in the Land Use Bylaw and is allowed (with the landowner's permission) in all districts except in the Special Purpose – Urban Nature (S-UN) zone.

Growing food outdoors to sell (Urban Agriculture) and growing food indoors to sell (Food Production) are only allowed in certain zones.

* This guide does not replace professional, legal, planning, or technical advice, and it should not be relied upon as a definitive interpretation of City of Calgary bylaws, provincial legislation, or other regulatory requirements. Rules and processes may change over time, and additional approvals or requirements may apply depending on the details of your project. Project proponents are responsible for confirming current requirements and obtaining all necessary approvals.

Land Use Districts	Urban Agriculture	Food Production
Multi-Residential Districts (M-CG, M-C1, M-C2, M-G, M-1, M-2, M-H1, M-H2, M-H3, M-X1, M-X2)	Allowed	Not Allowed
Commercial Districts (C-N1, C-N2, C-C1, C-C2, C-COR1, C-COR2, C-COR3, C-O, C-R1, C-R2)	Allowed	Allowed
Industrial Districts (I-G, I-B, I-C, I-R, I-O, I-H)	Allowed except in I-H	Allowed*
Special Purpose Districts (S-UN, S-SPR, S-CS, S-R, S-CI, S-CRI, S-URP, S-FUD, S-TUC)	Allowed in S-CS, S-R, S-CI, S-CRI, and S-URP** only	Not Allowed
Centre City Districts (CC-MH, CC-MHX, CC-X, CC-COR)	Allowed	Allowed in CC-X* and CC-COR
Centre City East Village Districts (CC-ET, CC-EIR, CC-EMU, CC-EPR, CC-ERR, CC-ER)	Allowed	Allowed except in CC-ER
Commercial Residential Districts (CR20-C20/R20)	Allowed	Allowed
Mixed Use Districts (MU-1, MU-2)	Allowed	Allowed

* & ** Food Production is allowed under General Industrial – Light, General Industrial – Medium, General Industrial – Heavy uses, or Specialized Industrial uses.

If you own a parcel where you would like to do Urban Agriculture or Food Production but the use is not allowed, you can apply for a [Land Use Amendment](#) (also called a Land Use Redesignation) to change the land use district.

Low Density Residential and Housing Districts

Urban Agriculture and Food Production are not allowed in Low Density Residential and Housing Districts (R-CG, R-G, R-Gm, R-2M, R-MN, H-GO); however, a resident may apply for a Development Permit - Home Occupation Class 2 to grow and sell produce on a property if they reside on the property and have the permission of the property owner.

4.3 Development permits

If the land use district allows Urban Agriculture or Food Production, you still need a Development Permit. This is formal approval from The City that lets you use the property for these activities. If you are not the owner of the land, you will need written permission from the property owner in the form of a Letter of Authorization as part of your application.

You do not need a Development Permit for Urban Agriculture if all these conditions are met (see section 25.1.h of the [Land Use Bylaw](#)):

- Trees and shrubs required on the parcel in conjunction with an approved Development Permit are retained;
- There are no local food sales; and
- There is a maximum of one ancillary building 10.0 square metres or less in the area for the purposes of storage.

Urban Gardening usually does not require a Development Permit. However, permits may be required if the project includes certain things like new structures, fences or planters and retaining walls that are taller than allowed limits, changes to an approved Site Plan, or other features regulated by the [Land Use Bylaw](#). If you are not sure if you need a permit, contact the Planning Services Centre at 403-268-5311 or calgary.ca/livechat.

See [here](#) for full information on the Development Permit process.

4.4 Building permits

Building permits are usually required when you build or change a structure. This includes greenhouses, hoop houses, sheds, or other structures used for growing food. Building permits may be waived for small structures under 10 square meters if they do not create a safety hazard. See [here](#) for further information.

You need a building permit for large planter boxes and retaining walls that meet height and other requirements. See [here](#) for full details.

If you add electrical, plumbing, or mechanical systems—like lights, ventilation, watering systems, or outlets—you will need separate permits for those trades.

If you are starting Food Production business inside an existing building, you will need a building permit and trade permits for any changes, such as HVAC or plumbing upgrades.

See [here](#) for full information on the Building Permit process.

4.5 Business licenses

You need a business license if you are selling food or other products. You can find details about business license requirements [here](#).

Participation in the [Farm Stands Program](#) may be an option selling whole fruits and vegetables. Visit the [Farm Stands Program](#) webpage for more information.

4.6 Alberta Health Services approvals

If you are processing or packaging food, you will require a food handling permit from [Alberta Health Services](#).

Alberta Health Services resources:

- [Information for Your Business – Food Facilities](#)
- [Starting a Food Business in Calgary and Surrounding Areas](#)

4.7 Occupational health and safety

Urban farming projects with paid employees are required to comply with the [Occupational Health and Safety](#) (OHS) Act and may need [workplace insurance](#).

4.8 Bylaws

The following sections explain the main bylaws that apply to urban farming projects. Other bylaws may apply depending on what you grow, how big your project is, and where it is located.

4.8.1 Community Standards Bylaw

The [Community Standards Bylaw](#) helps promote good neighbour relationships and keep neighbourhoods pleasant and functional. All urban farming projects must follow rules about issues like noise, odours, messy areas, proper composting, weed control, structure maintenance, and avoiding activities that bother neighbours.

4.8.2 Water bylaws

The [Water Utility Bylaw](#) (40M2006) sets rules for water use in community and commercial growing. It covers customer responsibilities, water rates, conservation, emergency restrictions, outdoor watering limits, and alternative water sources.

Other water-related bylaws that may affect urban farming include:

- [Stormwater Bylaw](#) – Makes sure water drains properly on and around your property.
- [Wastewater Bylaw](#) – Protects Calgary's wastewater system.
- [Lot Grading Bylaw](#) – Ensures new buildings have proper grading so water drains away from structures.
- [Water Meter Bylaw](#) – Requires water meters for properties that used to pay flat rates.

4.8.3 Waste Bylaw

The [Waste Bylaw](#) sets the rules for waste (including garbage, recyclables, and food and yard waste) in Calgary. Urban farming projects must follow rules for yard waste, using carts and containers properly, keeping properties clean, and prohibited items. If you run a business or organization, you must separate food and yard waste from garbage for composting.

4.9 Livestock

Raising livestock is not generally permitted within the city of Calgary. Aquaculture (raising seafood) and entomoculture (raising insects) are permitted in certain land use districts and under specific regulations. See [here](#) for further details.

4.10 Taxes

Urban farming projects may have to pay certain taxes including property taxes, business improvement area taxes, local improvement taxes, or others.

Property taxes are charged every year by The City of Calgary based on the market value of the property. Small-scale projects and new buildings or structures may or may not affect property taxes.

The City offers [property tax exemptions](#) for eligible non-profit organizations engaged in charitable or benevolent activities that benefit the general public. Organizations doing Urban Gardening may apply for an exemption if the conditions of provincial legislation and regulations are met. If approved, the property may be fully or partly exempt from property taxes. It is the organization's responsibility to apply. For projects on City-owned land, the lessee is responsible for paying taxes or applying for exemptions.

Urban Agriculture and Food Production businesses have extra tax responsibilities from the provincial and federal governments, including:

- Report business income to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).
- Fresh produce is zero-rated under the federal GST system, but businesses must still collect, file, and remit GST on eligible goods.
- If you have employees, you must deduct income tax, Employment Insurance, and Canada Pension Plan contributions and remit them to the CRA.
- Export duties may apply if selling internationally.
- Some operations may have to pay environmental levies.



5. INFRASTRUCTURE & OPERATIONS

Urban farming projects must have appropriate infrastructure and operational practices in order to be safe, sustainable, and compliant with City regulations.

5.1 Water

Access to safe, reliable, and affordable water is essential for urban farming. The following sections cover the basics, but additional considerations may apply depending on the type and size of your project.



5.1.1 Municipal water service

If your site already has water service and an ENMAX account, you can use City water and pay normal rates. You cannot get a second water line at an already serviced parcel for a growing project, you must use the existing connection. If you receive approval for a new water line you will be responsible to pay for connection, meter installation, and ongoing billing.



5.1.2 Water delivery (Hauled water)

If water service is not available, you can buy bulk water from City fill stations or hire a company to deliver it.

Small, above ground tanks do not need permits if they are free-standing and not connected to plumbing. Permanent tanks, underground cisterns, and systems connected to plumbing require Development Permits and Building Permits. If you are unsure if your systems needs permits contact the [*Planning Services Centre*](#).



5.1.3 Rainwater harvesting

Rainwater collected from roofs and other surfaces can carry bacteria and contaminants. The collection and use of rainwater is done at the grower's own risk. Stored rainwater or greywater is considered non-potable and may require a treatment system to meet safety standards.

If you use rainwater for crops, precautions should be taken to ensure food safety. See the [*Food Retail and Foodservices Code*](#) for further information.

All rainwater harvesting activities that involve tanks, pipes, cisterns, or treatment must follow City bylaws, the City's [*Rainwater Harvesting Guidelines*](#), the Alberta Building Code, and the National Plumbing Code (note that these Codes have precedence over City guidelines).

You cannot use water from storm ponds, ditches, storm sewers, or catch basins. These systems are for flood management and water quality protection, not irrigation.



5.1.4 Greywater

Any use of greywater must comply with The National Plumbing Code and [Public Health Guidelines for Water Reuse and Stormwater Use](#). Use of greywater is done at the grower's own risk.

5.1.5 Water restrictions

Sometimes [outdoor watering restrictions](#) are put in place to address water shortages. Businesses growing plants for sale and community groups growing food for donation are not affected by water restrictions at any stage, however, reducing water use during restrictions is strongly encouraged.



5.1.6 Cross connection control

If your irrigation system is connected to City water, you must install an approved backflow preventer. This device stops contaminated water from flowing back into the drinking water supply. The City requires annual testing of these devices. Seasonal irrigation systems must be tested when they are turned on each year. See the [Water Utility Bylaw](#) and the Cross Connection Control Program for more details.

5.1.7 Stormwater pollution prevention

The [Stormwater Bylaw](#) outlines regulations that urban growing projects must follow to prevent stormwater pollution. By complying with the bylaw, you can avoid fines and the need for costly clean-up, and help keep our stormwater system and waterways safe and clean.

5.2 Waste

Urban farming projects must appropriately manage waste in compliance with City regulations. See the City's [business waste information](#) webpage for full information.

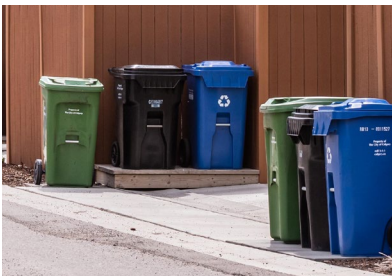


5.2.1 Organic waste

Organic waste includes plants, leaves, branches, prunings, and grass clippings. All businesses and organizations must separate organic waste from garbage for composting. Organic waste can be taken to a City Eco Centre for a fee or a waste hauler can be hired.

On-site composting for urban farming projects is encouraged because it reduces fertilizer costs, lowers emissions from hauling, and supports a circular economy. Composting must follow the Community Standards Bylaw to avoid bad odours or pests. Open compost piles are not allowed within 10 metres of a home.

Compost made for commercial sale is regulated by provincial and federal laws and may need additional approvals from those orders of government.



5.2.2 Recycling and garbage

Recycling includes paper, cardboard, metals, and certain plastics. Garbage includes any non-hazardous materials that cannot be recycled or composted. Businesses and organizations must manage their own recycling and garbage programs. Recyclables can be taken to a Community Recycling Depot and garbage can be taken to a [City Eco Centre](#), or a waste hauler can be hired.



5.2.3 Hazardous waste

Hazardous waste includes chemicals or materials that can harm health, safety, or the environment if not handled properly. Examples include fuels, fuel containers, and chemicals with hazard symbols such as pesticides. Growers must identify hazardous materials and dispose of them according to City rules. See the [Know Before You Throw](#) – Business Waste Search Tool. If you must temporarily store hazardous waste onsite, put it in secure, clearly labeled containers away from areas where food is grown or processed.

Hazardous waste is regulated by the Province of Alberta and growers must comply with applicable rules and regulations. See [here](#) for more information.

If hazardous materials spill:

- Call 911 if there is an emergency (fire or explosion), if gasoline or oil is spilled, if the spill cannot be contained, or if materials are entering soil or storm drains.
- Report spills that enter City property by calling 311.
- Report spills that could harm the environment (air, soil, groundwater, or surface water) to Alberta Environment and Parks at 1-800-222-6514.



6. DISTRIBUTING FOOD

Food grown in Calgary can be sold, donated, or shared in different ways. All commercial distribution activities must follow City bylaws, Alberta Health Services rules, and provincial and federal laws. Planning early for distribution will help to avoid regulatory delays and wasted food.

6.1 On-site sales

Selling food directly from the growing site helps build community and shows the connection between growing and eating. Urban Agriculture projects may sell food from a temporary stand on the site. Food Production projects may include a small retail area, but special approval may be needed depending on the size and land use district.

6.2 Farm stand sales

The City's [Farm Stand Program](#) works with small growers to sell local and regionally grown food at approved locations across the city. This program helps new growers reach customers, promotes local food, and brings fresh produce to more community hubs.



Farmstand Program, Calgary.



Farmstand Program, Calgary.

6.3 Other sales opportunities

Urban farmers can use many different ways to sell food. Each option has different rules and challenges, so growers should choose what fits their goals and capacity:

- Farmers' markets help growers reach a wide customer base, but often require vendor fees and operate only at set times and places.
- Community supported agriculture (CSA) involves customer subscriptions to receive regular produce boxes. This gives steady income and reduces waste, but needs careful planning and logistics.
- Online sales (direct-to-consumer) can be low cost and provide wide reach, but requires technical skills and expenses for delivery.
- Selling to restaurants or stores provides steady income, but may have strict requirements for quantity and quality.
- Emergency food sector providers like food banks or meal programs may purchase from local growers to support community food security, but might offer lower prices or have particular requirements.

6.4 Donating and sharing

Giving away some or all of a harvest helps support food security and reduce food waste. Growers can work with organizations like food banks, community fridges, or meal programs. [Alberta's Charitable Donation of Food Act](#) protects donors from liability if food is donated in good faith and handled safely. Keep simple records of what and when you donate. Make sure food is clean, fresh, and stored properly. Plan donation partnerships early so food can be shared quickly after harvest.

See [here](#) for information about many different community organizations that support Calgarians facing food insecurity

GLOSSARY

Term	Definition	Reference
Urban Agriculture	The growing of plants outdoors for sale or commercial purposes.	See Calgary Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 "Urban Agriculture" for full rules.
Food production	The growing of plants indoors for sale or commercial purposes.	See Calgary Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 "Food Production" for full rules.
Urban gardening	The growing of plants for personal consumption, sharing, or donation.	
Home occupation – Class 2	The incidental use of a resident’s home for business purposes.	See Calgary Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 "Home Occupation – Class 2" for full rules.