



*Formerly Capital District Community Gardens*

FOR RELEASE: December 3, 2014, 10:30 AM

CONTACT: Amy Klein, Capital Roots, [amy@capitalroots.org](mailto:amy@capitalroots.org) or (518) 274-8685

## **Capital District Community Gardens Opens Regional Food Hub and Announces New Name - Capital Roots**

**TROY** – Today at the grand opening of its new headquarters and food hub, The Urban Grow Center, Capital District Community Gardens announced that it has changed its name to Capital Roots. For nearly forty years, the nonprofit has been named for just one of its eleven programs that help reduce the impact of poor nutrition on public health by providing access to fresh food and green spaces for all residents throughout the Capital Region’s four counties.

More than 200 community members gathered outside The Urban Grow Center to watch as Capital Roots’ Executive Director Amy Klein unfurled a banner that displayed the nonprofit’s new name and logo on the side of the building’s water reuse silo. Following the unveiling of Capital Roots, Klein used a pair of gardening pruners to clip a grape vine that hung from the building’s entrance ramp. The community was invited in for a tour of the 12,000-square-foot, 165-year-old industrial property that the nonprofit rehabbed with sustainable building technologies, including solar panels, a living roof, water reuse systems and permeable paving.

Inside, community members enjoyed seeing the spaces that have been made available to them. Klein cut a garland of fresh produce, opening the onsite marketplace (sponsored by MVP Healthcare) that will make fresh, affordable fruits and vegetables available to visitors to the building and residents of the surrounding neighborhood. She cut a garland of seed packets to open the gardener resource room (sponsored by SEFCU), where seeds and gardening texts are made available and gardening and culinary classes are held. As visitors explored Capital Roots’ volunteer center, Klein explained that the facility is handicap accessible so that the nonprofit can now fully involve volunteers with disabilities in the work they do. Equipped with loading bays and 500-square-feet of cold storage space, the produce distribution center will enable Capital Roots to distribute 1,000,000 pounds of fresh produce to 300,000 residents each year.

Capital Roots has raised 80 percent of the \$2.8 million needed to fund the first phase of The Urban Grow Center’s development. The nonprofit is encouraging residents from all of our region’s communities to help raise the final dollars needed to fund the completion of this food hub that harnesses the power of local agriculture to provide social and economic benefits for

the entire region. Tax-deductible gifts can be made online at [capitalroots.org](http://capitalroots.org) or mailed to 594 River Street, Troy, NY 12180.

The project has received more than \$510,000 from New York State as part of Governor Andrew Cuomo's Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) initiative. The Urban Grow Center is a priority project for the Capital Region Economic Development Council to spur development in a distressed riverfront neighborhood, invest in the development of a local foods infrastructure and support our state's agriculture industry.

The Urban Grow Center has received state funding in the second and third rounds of the REDC, including a \$196,347 Green Innovation Grant from the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation for rain gardens, permeable walkways and other green stormwater management projects. Stormwater from the roof will also be collected and reused for irrigation in the garden.

Other state funding includes a \$250,000 grant from The Empire State Development for the renovation of the building, and the purchase of furniture and equipment for the Urban Grow Center, and a \$64,956 grant from the state Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to acquire land around the intersection of Fifth Avenue and Jay Street.

The Regional Economic Development Council initiative (REDC) is a key component of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's transformative approach to State investment and economic development. In 2011, Governor Cuomo established 10 Regional Councils to develop long-term strategic plans for economic growth for their regions. The Councils are public-private partnerships made up of local experts and stakeholders from business, academia, local government, and non-governmental organizations. The Regional Councils have redefined the way New York invests in jobs and economic growth by putting in place a community-based, bottom up approach and establishing a competitive process for State resources. After three rounds of the REDC process, more than \$2 billion has been awarded to job creation and community development projects consistent with each region's strategic plans, resulting in creation or retention of more than 100,000 jobs.

###

*Capital Roots, formerly Capital District Community Gardens, is a 39-year-old nonprofit organization that nourishes healthy communities with 50 Community Gardens, The Veggie Mobile® produce market, Healthy Stores, The Produce Project, Squash Hunger and more. Capital Roots is in the midst of a fund raising campaign to finish The Urban Grow Center. This regional facility is a bustling hub focused on urban agriculture and produce distribution to four counties. The Urban Grow Center will enable Capital Roots to triple its ability to deliver local food and services to underserved neighborhoods and low-income families. Learn more at [capitalroots.org](http://capitalroots.org).*

\*\*\*\*\*