Potato Leek Soup

Ingredients:
- 1 large leek, stalk removed and coarsely chopped
- 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
- 3 sticks celery, chopped
- 2-3 carrots, peeled and chopped
- 5 medium yellow potatoes
- ½ head of green cabbage, chopped
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- Salt to taste
- Pepper to taste
- Cayenne Pepper to taste (optional)

Directions:
- On medium heat, sauté the leek, onion, celery and carrots in olive oil for about 10 minutes.
- Add potatoes and broth and bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer.
- Simmer until potatoes are tender, about 15 minutes.
- Add cabbage and spices and simmer for another 15 minutes.
- When cabbage is tender, use an immersion blender to puree, or transfer to a blender of food processor to puree.
- Puree until there are no vegetable chunks in the soup and it is of uniform consistency.

Creating Healthy Communities to Live, Work and Play

In October, Capital Roots was awarded a new 5-year grant from the New York State Department of Health that will enable the organization to not only expand access to fresh food across the Capital Region, but also begin developing transportation policies focusing on “complete streets” initiatives. In collaboration with St. Peter’s Health Partners, this Creating Healthy Schools and Communities Grant will be one of the largest grants we have ever received. While our partners at St. Peter’s work on nutrition and health education in selected school districts, Capital Roots’ staff will focus on creating new opportunities to access healthy, fresh food in those same under-served communities; providing a holistic approach to healthy lifestyles. This grant is exciting because it will enable us to strengthen and expand current programs, as well as develop new initiatives that will keep Capital Roots at the forefront of food access in NYS and across the nation.

One of our primary objectives will be to expand and strengthen our innovative Healthy Stores program. This grant will focus on the communities of Rensselaer, Troy, Albany, Cohoes, Watervliet, and Schenectady; giving us resources to bring Healthy Store units to small businesses in communities we have not yet been able to reach. Since the grant was awarded in October, we have already added two new stores—one in the Pine Hills neighborhood of Albany and one in the city of Rensselaer. Beyond expansion, this grant will allow us to create a “certification” for Healthy Stores that will set standards about carrying nutritional items and in return, we will work for financial incentives to provide the stores. Customers will then be able to readily identify that healthy food is available at that location.

To take food access further into our communities, this grant will give us the resources necessary to begin working on healthy vending. We will be working with our partners to place more nutritionally valuable options in machines. Items such as water, real fruit juice and smarter snacks will become more readily available to customers as we help push junk and processed food to the periphery. Those simple changes, coupled with an educational marketing campaign will help educate the community about how to choose items that will help them feel their best.

While some of our staff has been working on transportation issues in Troy over the past few years, this new grant will allow us to expand our work to the greater Capital Region. We will be taking our expertise and previous successes to our same target communities where we will be working on food access issues. Our goals will not only be to create a grassroots campaign that will develop and advocate for local legislation to follow complete streets principals and conduct infrastructure projects, but also to expand and connect the network of bike and pedestrian trails that weave throughout our region. Our goal is to have a true network of trails that will allow residents to bike from Voorheesville, through Albany to Troy, Watervliet and Cohoes, on to Schenectady and the Erie Canalway!

This truly is an exciting time at Capital Roots. We cannot wait to get started on these initiatives and creating communities where all residents not only have access to fresh food, but have safe streets to live, work, and play.

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- Autumn Evening
- From Our Food Hub
- New Staff/Upgrades
- Produce Project Orchard
- Education/Squash Hunger

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From Our Food Hub

by Amy Klein, Executive Director

2015 will be a year to remember. This momentous year was our first in the Urban Grow Center – a long held goal for Capital Roots, made possible by the hard work and support of thousands. We spent this year putting the finishing touches on the first phase of this exciting project by installing energy saving solar panels, a porous pavement parking lot that is helping to preserve our environment and showcase green technologies, and a beautiful mural installed in our parking area by people from all across our community. And we realized the ultimate goal of this phase of the Grow Center – to improve our programs and impact on the community. In just our first year, we have already increased the amount of produce we are distributing by 33%

In July we celebrated the opening of our 50th community garden. This milestone was reached after opening a new garden in East Greenbush and was followed by the creation of our 51st site. It seems so fitting that our first program – the community gardens – would reach such a significant achievement as the organization is celebrating its 40th Anniversary. Squash Hunger had a record-breaking year – collecting, rescuing and distributing 80,000 pounds of fresh produce to families in need. With hundreds of volunteer hours, we were able to work with new partners to rescue produce. And thanks to farms across our region we began gleaning fields of greens in June and haven’t stopped, most recently picking turnips in December!

Our educational programs blossomed this year as well. Our community gardeners learned improved growing, preserving and cooking techniques. Youngsters from Troy to Schenectady have enjoyed learning about and eating fruits and vegetables through our Taste Good Series. And, thanks to support from the Albany Guardian Society, we have presented classes to seniors on topics from windowsill gardening to healthy eating.

Because of the generosity of hundreds of supporters and volunteers, our spring and fall events in 2015 attracted more interest and raised record-breaking funds for all of our programs. Capital Roots teamed up with Tri-City Rentals to celebrate Earth Day by helping to collect almost 300,000 pounds of electronic waste for recycling. And we were so proud to be selected by the NYS Public Health Association as the recipient of the award for Outstanding Leadership by an Organization.

So much to be proud of… as staff, volunteers, donors. I hope you all share in my pride because you all made it possible. When I think about the coming year and the work we have ahead of us I’m moved by words from our Produce Project student trainees on what the program has meant to them…

"It made me stronger as a person."  
"You don't have to be afraid to be yourself here."  
"Things we learned here we can apply to real life."

Support Capital Roots

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Please make your tax deductible check payable to Capital Roots, 594 River Street, Troy, NY 12180.

INTERESTED IN GETTING MORE INVOLVED?

□ Volunteer with the Produce Project on Thursdays
□ Join the Veggie Mobile® team on Saturdays
□ Help out around the Urban Grow Center offices

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BEST BOWLATHON. EVER.

19th Annual Garden Bowl
Saturday, January 30 – 2pm-5pm
Uncle Sam Lanes – 600 Fulton St., Troy
Register today at:
bit.ly/CapitalRoots_GardenBowl

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Write Capital into your will...

Here are simple ways to include Capital Roots in your financial planning:

- Designate a piece of property (house, land, vehicle, etc.) to be donated to Capital Roots.
- List Capital Roots as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy or retirement account.
- Include a specific dollar designation: ‘I bequeath $ ____________ (must amount to be donated) to Capital Roots, Inc., a nonprofit corporation as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Tax I.D. #14-1596291. Capital Roots may be contacted at 594 River Street, Troy NY 12180, 518-274-8685.’
- Provide all or a fraction of your estate: ‘I bequeath to Capital Roots, Inc., a nonprofit corporation as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Tax I.D. #14-1596291, all or [state the fraction or percentage] of the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate, both real and personal. Capital Roots may be contacted at 594 River Street, Troy NY 12180, 518-274-8685.’

*Content should be written or edited by your attorney.

However you choose to include Capital Roots, know that you will be providing for the health and well-being of your community for decades to come. And, we thank you!

Double your Donation...

Make the most of your gift to Capital Roots! Many employers in our region will match employees’ gifts to not-for-profit organizations such as Capital Roots – but according to Double the Donation, between $5-10 billion dollars in potential matching gifts go unclaimed every year!

If your employer matches gifts (GE, Key Bank, Bank of America, Regeneron, Bechtel, Pitney Bowes, Turner Construction, 3M, National Grid, Phillips Healthcare – to name just a few!) please take a minute and submit the paperwork to have your gift matched.

If you’re not sure whether your employer offers this benefit, contact your human resources department, or do a search for “matching gift search engine” to find a website where you can look up your employer.

Participate in a matching gift program through your workplace!

Participatory Art
at its Finest

Capital Roots has some visual additions to the Urban Grow Center landscape by way of community participatory art installations. A 400-square-foot mosaic depicting an urban scene bursting with fruits and vegetables now lives on the retaining wall of our parking lot. Over 500 people participated in the creation of the tile and installation of the mosaic. Our own urban landscape is reflected in the mirror, which outlines the images, adding another layer to the multi-dimensional art installation. A few weeks later, giant strawberries woven into CDTA bus lines emerged on the 4-way crosswalk at the crossing of River St and Jay St. This installation was woven into CDTA bus lines and also deployed into Poughkeepsie through a CDTA partnership with the City of Poughkeepsie.

Additionally, a handful of years on food access. Liz Boyer, who was our Sprout Coordinator, is now our Food Hub Coordinator responsible for our entire food hub buying and selling. Kelly Weiner moves from an assistant on the Veggie Mobile® into the Healthy Stores Organizer position.

Designed by the same artist as the community mosaic, Jillian Hirsch playfully placed fruit and vines along pedestrian passageways to call attention to safe spaces for those who walk around our city. Our Creative Crosswalk is one of many installed throughout Troy thanks to funding from our Creating Healthy Places Grant, CDTA, The Community Builders, The Arts Center, and the Troy Alley Action/Transport Troy working groups. Meetings are held at 5:30pm on the second Wednesday of every month at the Urban Grow Center and are open to the public. So, next time you stop by be sure to take a moment to appreciate the community art pieces we are honored to house at the Urban Grow Center!

URBAN GROW CENTER
Fresh Food At Work

New Staff, New Opportunities

With the award of our new Healthy Schools and Communities Grant from the NYS Department of Health, we have a number of new objectives we are striving to meet in the next few years. To help us achieve those goals and strengthen our programs, Capital Roots was able to conduct a reorganization of our food access team, which not only better reflects the work that we have been doing, but the needs we will have in the future. Our first step was to create a few new positions and promote staff who have been working diligently over the past handful of years on food access. Liz Boyer, who was our Sprout Coordinator, is now our Food Hub Coordinator responsible for our entire food hub buying and selling. Kelly Weiner moves from an assistant on the Veggie Mobile® into the Healthy Stores Organizer position.

Participatory Art
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Designed by the same artist as the community mosaic, Jillian Hirsch playfully placed fruit and vines along pedestrian passageways to call attention to safe spaces for those who walk around our city. Our Creative Crosswalk is one of many installed throughout Troy thanks to funding from our Creating Healthy Places Grant, CDTA, The Community Builders, The Arts Center, and the Troy Alley Action/Transport Troy working groups. Meetings are held at 5:30pm on the second Wednesday of every month at the Urban Grow Center and are open to the public. So, next time you stop by be sure to take a moment to appreciate the community art pieces we are honored to house at the Urban Grow Center!
The orchard is here.

Next spring, blossoming fruit trees and shrubs will add another layer of interest and deliciousness to the Produce Project 8th Street Urban Farm. Funded by an Environmental Justice Grant from New York State’s Department of Environmental Conservation, the farm’s new urban orchard will hold hundreds of plants, including blueberries, raspberries, peaches and plums. The grant also supports the completion of the ornamental plantings surrounding the farm. This new 600 foot shrub border will add beauty to the neighborhood throughout the year, with colorful flowers, fruits and foliage. Its many native trees and shrubs will provide important habitat for birds and beneficial insects. The shrub border in addition to the existing 400 feet of flowers that line the street in front of the farm, and like the flower border, will be the source of bouquets for the farm stand as well as cheerful comments from passersby. Jim Boswell, a regular Thursday volunteer at the farm’s Dongan Hills location, said, “I’ve seen that the orchard expansion—what we’ve always been difficult to maintain—by tearing out weeds, building retaining walls and converting areas to grass and small fruits. Other new planting areas for vegetables have been established, while the composting area of the farm has been redesigned to allow larger and more efficient production. Cardboard from Feiden’s appliance store, and nearby a hundred yards of woodchips from National Grid are being used to smother an invasive weed that has left one planting block unusable. That block will remain fallow next year, returning to production in the year following. Good things take time; much of the orchard will take several years to bear fruit and there will be plenty of hard work between the planting and harvesting. But by year by year the farm continues to transform its neighborhood and make a difference in the lives of those who visit and work there. Maintaining the farm using organic methods adds time and labor to the process of developing the orchard and operating the farm. By avoiding pesticides however, we provide a safe spot for the youth who farm there, as well as the many other creatures that call it home. As we have tamed more and more of the expanded acreage for farming, we have tried to create productive wild space for these animals. They are not only an important part of our farm’s character; they contribute to the complex web of natural relationships that keep our crops healthy and free of pests. As Julia Cosgrove, Farm Manager, gathered kale for harvest in October, she was not alone. A red tailed hawk sat on the lampost behind her, its head bent intently, watching her at work.

There are always opportunities to volunteer at the 8th Street Urban Farm. Join us this fall volunteers in these photos. Don’t be a stranger! We’d love to have you join us!

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Healthy Stores
Fresh Food Fast
Making Moves in 2015

The Healthy Stores program has added its 16th location and its first in the City of Rensselaer: Steven’s Market! Located at 47 Washington Street, the store saw unparalleled success in its first two weeks in the program, selling out of most items from the first delivery in less than one week. Owner Omar said the success may be partially attributed to a fall outreach event held at the store along with flyering at nearby Veggie Mobile® stops (the mobile market makes four stops in Rensselaer on Thursdays). “I can’t believe how excited the customers are about the produce,” he told us. “I plan to start ordering twice per week to keep up with the demand.” These are the success stories that we are proud to share at Capital Roots. This year we added three stores to the Healthy Stores lineup, but we’ve seen exciting growth in our established Healthy Stores as well. Midtown Market, one of the program’s first locations in Troy, entered the fall placing three orders a week to keep up with customer demand for fresh, healthy food, a record for the program. Owner Nicole said moving their cooler to a more prominent location seemed to encourage customers to purchase healthier options.

Other stores, such as Can Stop Redemption Center in south Troy, have increased sales by promoting the sale of seasonal products. Owner Melissa has built relationships with many customers that make special requests for local, seasonal produce. “I have customers coming in looking specifically for Produce Project herbs, local squash and more,” she said. “I can always depend on Capital Roots to have fresh local produce.”

Volunteer Spotlight

Members of the Center for Disability Services team pack Taste and Take bags of cranberries the week before Thanksgiving.

The Center for Disability Services and Capital Roots have enjoyed a successful working relationship for the past year and a half. Each week a dedicated group of volunteers join us at the Urban Grow Center to support our Taste and Take series, helping to bag a weekly produce giveaway which can include everything from grapes to pumpkins. Each individual brings something different to the table whether it is helping clean, pack bags or weigh different produce items to help the “Food Access Team” maximize the Veggie Mobile®’s ability to provide local neighborhoods with fresh, healthy and affordable food.

During most weeks, this group fulfills our weekly bag needs, but goes above and beyond to help out around the food hub. They finish tasks for the Veggie Mobile®, Healthy Stores and Produce Market which can include such tasks as bagging grapes and peanuts, breaking down large boxes, sweeping the floors and helping pack produce with staff members. We are so grateful to have their helping hands all throughout the year and truly believe that without their help—and the help of all of our Capital Roots volunteers—we would not be able to provide such important services to our neighbors.

Thank you to our friends at the
Center for Disability Services
Where people get better at life

From our Educator
Entering the New Year with New Partners

As we begin planning our educational programming for 2016, we look back on 2015 and consider how we’ll build upon our successes and create new partnerships and initiatives that will reach more children, families and seniors around the Region.

Seymour Fox Foundation funding provided for nearly 200 kindergarten and first grade students from Turnpike Elementary and School 14 in Troy the opportunity to participate in Capital Roots’ Taste Good Series. This six-week program encourages youngsters to try different fruits and vegetables through a series of fun activities, games, stories, and samples. This fall, Capital Roots partnered with the Jewish Community Center in Schenectady to implement the Taste Good Series in afterschool programs at Hillside and Rosendale Elementary Schools.

Workshops on gardening and healthy food preparation were held throughout the year in our community gardens and at our Urban Grow Center. Capital Roots has presented six workshops designed for seniors, thanks to our strong partnership with the Albany Guardian Society. Three additional healthy food workshops will be held in December at senior housing sites around the area, and we are currently working on a schedule of classes for 2016 that will include topics related to gardening for seniors.

Taste Good Series
Nurturing Healthy Lifestyles

Working with the Dieticians at each of the four Capital Region stores, ShopRite Supermarkets partnered with Capital Roots to undertake a food drive, encouraging shoppers to donate a produce item. More than 750 pounds were collected and distributed to local feeding programs. Throughout the growing season, community and home gardeners, farms and CSA’s, produce distributors and markets have donated thousands of pounds of fresh fruits and veggies to help feed hungry families around the Region. Produce collection bins at Honest Weight Food Coop, Niskayuna Food Coop, Fred the Butcher (Clifton Park), and Delmar Marketplace will remain in place for your donations through the upcoming holiday season.

And with more gleanings coming up and farmers’ markets still in full swing, there are plenty of opportunities for collecting and distributing more fresh healthy produce to those in need. Contact Liz, our Squash Hunger coordinator, at squashhunger@capitalroots.org if you are interested in volunteering.

Squash Hunger
Fresh Food For All

Breaking Records

This has been an incredibly fruitful year for Capital Roots’ Squash Hunger program. With cooperation and assistance from local farms, orchards and numerous volunteers, Capital Roots has toppled last year’s total pounds of produce collected with 79,080 pounds collected to date! Thanks to partnerships with Goolds Orchard, Best Berry Farm, Colfax Farm, Saratoga Apple, Wellington Herbs, TriShoke Farm, Remington’s Harvest, and Our Farm who have all generously provided opportunities for our staff and volunteers to glean thousands of pounds of fruits and vegetables this fall for donation to more than 50 area food pantries, shelters and soup kitchens.
Kicking off our 40th Anniversary at Autumn Evening in the Garden

Our 9th annual Autumn Evening event kicked off our 40th Anniversary on a celebratory note, raising a record-breaking $90,000 on September 17th at the Hilton Garden Inn in Troy! Twenty of our region’s top chefs and bakers teamed up with 40 local farmers to create culinary plates using fresh, seasonal ingredients, from squash and kale to rabbit and beef and everything in between. Nine beverage purveyors served samples of favorite local wine, beer and spirits. The Neil Brown Jazz Quartet provided captivating sounds while our nearly 350 guests mingled with chefs, farmers and friends during the event.

In honor of our 40th anniversary, local celebrity auctioneer LeGrande Serras helped us raise an additional $32,000 during our first ever live auction, supporting the purchase of upgraded vehicles for two of our seven programs. Thank you to everyone for your support during this first-ever Autumn Evening venture! As you know, proceeds from the event benefit our 51 Community Gardens, Veggie Mobile®, Produce Project, Healthy Stores, Squash Hunger and our other programs – allowing us to continue our mission of increasing access to fresh, affordable food in our region’s most underserved neighborhoods.

Over the course of the next year, we will find subtle ways to celebrate our 40th anniversary milestone every chance we get. We hope you will join us in whatever form that ongoing celebration takes. We hope to see you next year at our 10th annual Autumn Evening in the Garden gala!

~ Thank you to our generous Autumn Evening Sponsors ~

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For more photos from the evening, visit www.facebook.com/CapitalRootsNY.
In honor of our 40th anniversary, local celebrity auctioneer LeGrande Serras helped us raise an additional $32,000 during our first ever live auction, supporting the purchase of upgraded vehicles for two of our seven programs. Thank you to everyone for your support during this first-ever Autumn Evening venture!

As you know, proceeds from the event benefit our 51 Community Gardens, Veggie Mobile®, Produce Project, Healthy Stores, Squash Hunger and our other programs — allowing us to continue our mission of increasing access to fresh, affordable food in our region’s most underserved neighborhoods.

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Healthy Stores
Fresh Food Fast
Making Moves in 2015

The Healthy Stores program has added its 16th location and its first in the City of Rensselaer: Steven’s Market! Located at 47 Washington Street, the store saw unparalleled success in its first two weeks in the program, selling out of most items from the first delivery in less than one week. Owner Omar said the success may be partially attributed to a fall outreach event held at the store along with fliering at nearby Veggie Mobile® stops (the mobile market makes four stops in Rensselaer on Thursdays), “I can’t believe how excited the customers are about the produce,” he told us. “I plan to start ordering twice per week to keep up with the demand.” These are the success stories that we are proud to share at Capital Roots. This year we added three stores to the Healthy Stores lineup, but we’ve seen exciting growth in our established Healthy Stores as well. Midtown Market, one of the program’s first locations in Troy, entered the fall placing three orders a week to keep up with customer demand for fresh, healthy food, a record for the program. Owner Nicole said moving their cooler to a more prominent location seemed to encourage customers to purchase healthier options. Other stores, such as Can Stop Redemption Center in south Troy, have increased sales by promoting the sale of seasonal products. Owner Melissa has built relationships with many customers that make special requests for local, seasonal produce. “I have customers come in looking specifically for Produce Project herbs, local squash and more,” she said. “I can always depend on Capital Roots to have fresh local produce.”

Volunteer Spotlight

Members of the Center for Disability Services team pack Taste and Take bags of cranberries the week before Thanksgiving.

The Center for Disability Services and Capital Roots have enjoyed a successful working relationship for the past year and a half. Each week a dedicated group of volunteers join us at the Urban Grow Center to support our Taste and Take series, helping to bag a weekly produce giveaway which can include everything from grapes to pumpkins. Each individual brings something different to the table whether it is helping clean, pack bags or weigh different produce items to help the “Food Access Team” maximize the Veggie Mobile®’s ability to provide local neighborhoods with fresh, healthy and affordable food.

During most weeks, this group fulfills our weekly bag needs, but goes above and beyond to help out around the food hub. They finish tasks for the Veggie Mobile®, Healthy Stores and Produce Market which can include such tasks as bagging grapes and peanuts, breaking down large boxes, sweeping the floors and helping pack produce with staff members. We are so grateful to have their helping hands all throughout the year and truly believe that without their help—and the help of all of our Capital Roots volunteers—we would not be able to provide such important services to our neighbors.

Thank you to our friends at the Center for Disability Services

Where people get better at life

From our Educator
Entering the New Year with New Partners

As we begin planning our educational programming for 2016, we look back on 2015 and consider how we’ll build upon our successes and create new partnerships and initiatives that will reach more children, families and seniors around the Region.

Seymour Fox Foundation funding provided for nearly 200 kindergarten and first grade students from Tumpline Elementary and School 14 in Troy the opportunity to participate in Capital Roots’ Taste Good Series. This six-week program encourages youngsters to try different fruits and vegetables through a series of fun activities, games, stories, and samples. This fall, Capital Roots partnered with the Jewish Community Center in Schenectady to implement the Taste Good Series in afterschool programs at Hillside and Rosendale Elementary Schools.

Workshops on gardening and healthy food preparation were held throughout the year in our community gardens and at our Urban Grow Center. Capital Roots has presented six workshops designed for seniors, thanks to our strong partnership with the Albany Guardian Society. Three additional healthy food workshops will be held in December at senior housing sites around the area, and we are currently working on a schedule of classes for 2016 that will include topics related to gardening for seniors.

Taste Good Series
Nurturing Healthy Lifestyles

Squash Hunger
Fresh Food For All

Breaking Records

This has been an incredibly fruitful year for Capital Roots’ Squash Hunger program. With cooperation and assistance from local farms, orchards and numerous volunteers, Capital Roots has topped last year’s total pounds of produce collected with 79,080 pounds collected to date. Thanks to partnerships with Goold’s Orchard, Best Berry Farm, Colfax Farm, Saratoga Apple, Wellington Herbs, TriShoke Farm, Remington’s Harvest, and Our Farm who have all generously provided opportunities for our staff and volunteers to glean thousands of pounds of fruits and vegetables this fall for donation to more than 50 area food pantries, shelters and soup kitchens.

Working with the Dieticians at each of the four Capital Region stores, ShopRite Supermarkets partnered with Capital Roots to undertake a food drive, encouraging shoppers to donate a produce item. More than 750 pounds were collected and distributed to local feeding programs.

Throughout the growing season, community and home gardeners, farms and CSA’s, produce distributors and markets have donated thousands of pounds of fresh fruits and veggies to help feed hungry families around the Region. Produce collection bins at Honest Weight Food Coop, Niskayuna Food Coop, Fred the Butcher (Clifton Park), and Delmar Marketplace will remain in place for your donations through the upcoming holiday season. And with more gleanings coming up and farmers’ markets still in full swing, there are plenty of opportunities for collecting and distributing more fresh healthy produce to those in need. Contact Liz, our Squash Hunger coordinator, at squashhunger@capitalroots.org if you are interested in volunteering.
The orchard is here.

Next spring, blossoming fruit trees and shrubs will add another layer of interest and deliciousness to the Produce Project 8th Street Urban Farm. Funded by an Environmental Justice Grant from New York State’s Department of Environmental Conservation, the farm’s new urban orchard will hold hundreds of plants, including blueberries, raspberries, peaches, and plums. The grant also supports the completion of the ornamental plantings surrounding the farm. This new 600 foot scrub border will add beauty to the neighborhood throughout the year, with colorful flowers, fruits, and foliage. Many native trees and shrubs will provide important habitat for birds and beneficial insects. The shrub border in addition to the existing 400 feet of flowers that line the street in front of the farm, and like the flower border, will be the source of bouquets for the farm stand as well as cheerful comments from passersby.

Jim Boswell, a regular Thursday volunteer at the 8th Street Urban Farm, just like our fall volunteers in these photos. Don’t be a stranger! We’d love to have you join us!

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There are always opportunities to volunteer at the 8th Street Urban Farm. Just like our fall volunteers in these photos. Don’t be a stranger! We’d love to have you join us!
**Double your Donation...**

Make the most of your gift to Capital Roots! Many employers in our region will match employees' gifts to not-for-profit organizations such as Capital Roots – but according to Double the Donation, between $5-$10 billion dollars in potential matching gifts go unclaimed every year!

If your employer matches gifts (GE, Key Bank, Bank of America, Regeneron, Bechtel, Pitney Bowes, Turner Construction, 3M, National Grid, Phillips Healthcare – to name just a few!) please take a minute and submit the paperwork to have your gift matched.

If you’re not sure whether your employer offers this benefit, contact your human resources department, or do a search for “matching gift search engine” to find a website where you can look up your employer.

**Participate in a matching gift program through your workplace!**

**Participatory Art at its Finest**

Capital Roots has some visual additions to the Urban Grow Center landscape by way of community participatory art installations. A 400-square-foot mosaic depicting an urban scene bursting with fruits and vegetables now lives on the retaining wall of our parking lot. Over 500 people participated in the creation of the tile and installation of the mosaic. Our own urban landscape is reflected in the mirror, which outlines the images, adding another layer to the multi-dimensional art installation. A few weeks later, giant strawberries woven into CDTA bus lines emerged on the 4-way creative crosswalk at the crossing of River St and Jay St.

**Write Capital Roots into your will...**

Here are simple ways to include Capital Roots in your financial planning:

- **Designate a piece of property** (house, land, vehicle, etc.) to be donated to Capital Roots.
- **List Capital Roots as the beneficiary** of a life insurance policy or retirement account.
- **Include a specific dollar designation** to Capital Roots, Inc., a nonprofit corporation as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Tax I.D. #14-1596291. Capital Roots may be contacted at 594 River Street, Troy NY 12180, 518-274-8685.
- **Provide all or a fraction of your estate** to Capital Roots, Inc., a nonprofit corporation as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Tax I.D. #14-1596291, all [or state the fraction or percentage] of the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate, both real and personal. Capital Roots may be contacted at 594 River Street, Troy NY 12180, 518-274-8685.

*Content should be written or adapted by your attorney.

However you choose to include Capital Roots, know that you will be providing for the health and well-being of your community for decades to come. And, we thank you!
From Our Food Hub

by Amy Klein, Executive Director

2015 will be a year to remember.

This momentous year was our first in the Urban Grow Center - a long held goal for Capital Roots, made possible by the hard work and support of thousands. We spent this year putting the finishing touches on the first phase of this exciting project by installing energy saving solar panels, a porous pavement parking lot that is helping to preserve our environment and showcase green technologies, and a beautiful mural installed in our parking area by people from all across our community. And we realized the ultimate goal of this phase of the Grow Center – to improve our programs and impact on the community. For our first year, we have already increased the amount of produce we are distributing by 33%.

In July we celebrated the opening of our 50th community garden. This milestone was reached after opening a new garden in East Greenbush and was followed by the creation of our 51st site. It seems so fitting that our first program - the community gardens – would reach such a significant achievement as the organization is celebrating its 40th Anniversary.

Squash Hunger had a record-breaking year – collecting, rescuing and distributing 80,000 pounds of fresh produce to families in need. With hundreds of volunteer hours, we were able to work with new partners to rescue produce. And thanks to farms across our region we began gleaming fields of greens in June and haven’t stopped, most recently picking turnips in December!

Our educational programs blossomed this year as well. Our community gardeners learned improved growing, preserving and cooking techniques. Youngsters from Troy to Schenectady have enjoyed learning about and eating fruits and vegetables through our Taste Good Series. And, thanks to support from the Albany Guardian Society, we have presented classes to seniors on topics from window sill gardening to healthy eating.

Because of the generosity of hundreds of supporters and volunteers, our spring and fall events in 2015 attracted more interest and raised record-breaking funds for all of our programs. Capital Roots teamed up with Tri-City Rentals to celebrate Earth Day by helping to collect almost 300,000 pounds of electronic waste for recycling. And we were so proud to be selected by the NYS Public Health Association as the recipient of the award for Outstanding Leadership by an Organization. So much to be proud of… as staff, volunteers, donors. I hope you all share in my pride because you all made it possible.

When I think about the coming year and the work we have ahead of us I’m moved by words from our Produce Project student trainees on what the program has meant to them...

"It made me stronger as a person."
"You don't have to be afraid to be yourself here."
"Things we learned here we can apply to real life."

INTERESTED IN GETTING MORE INVOLVED?

□ Volunteer with the Produce Project on Thursdays
□ Join the Veggie Mobile® team on Saturdays
□ Help out around the Urban Grow Center offices

Support Capital Roots with a donation today!

Name:__________________________________________
Address:______________________________________
Phone:________________________________________
E-mail:________________________________________

□ $35 Friend  □ $300 Benefactor
□ $60 Sponsor  □ $600 Cultivator
□ $120 Supporter  □ $1200 Gardening Angel

Please make your tax deductible check payable to Capital Roots, 594 River Street, Troy, NY 12180.

Get ready for the

BEST. BOWLATHON. EVER.

19TH ANNUAL GARDEN BOWL

Saturday, January 30 – 2PM-5PM
Uncle Sam Lanes – 600 Fulton St., Troy

Register today at: bit.ly/CapitalRoots_GardenBowl
Creating Healthy Communities to Live, Work and Play

In October, Capital Roots was awarded a new 5-year grant from the New York State Department of Health that will enable the organization to not only expand access to fresh food across the Capital Region, but also begin developing transportation policies focusing on “complete streets” initiatives. In collaboration with St. Peter’s Health Partners, this Creating Healthy Schools and Communities Grant will be one of the largest grants we have ever received. While our partners at St. Peter’s work on nutrition and health education in selected school districts, Capital Roots’ staff will focus on creating new opportunities to access healthy, fresh food in those same under-served communities; providing a holistic approach to healthy lifestyles. This grant is exciting because it will enable us to strengthen and expand current programs, as well as develop new initiatives that will keep Capital Roots at the forefront of food access in NYS and across the nation.

One of our primary objectives will be to expand and strengthen our innovative Healthy Stores program. This grant will focus on the communities of Rensselaer, Troy, Albany, Cohoes, Watervliet, and Schenectady; giving us resources to bring Healthy Store units to small businesses in communities we have not yet been able to reach. Since the grant was awarded in October, we have already added two new stores—one in the Pine Hills neighborhood of Albany and one in the city of Rensselaer. Beyond expansion, this grant will allow us to create a “certification” for Healthy Stores that will set standards about carrying nutritional items and in return, we will work for financial incentives to provide the stores. Customers will then be able to readily identify that healthy food is available at that location. To take food access further into our community, this grant will give us the resources necessary to begin working on healthy vending. We will be working with our partners to place more nutritionally valuable options in machines. Items such as water, real fruit juice and smarter snacks will become more readily available to customers as we help push junk and processed food to the periphery.

Those simple changes, coupled with an educational marketing campaign will help educate the community about how to choose items that will help them feel their best.

While some of our staff has been working on transportation issues in Troy over the past few years, this new grant will allow us to expand our work to the greater Capital Region. We will be taking our expertise and previous successes to our same target communities where we will be working on food access issues. Our goals will not only be to create a grassroots campaign that will develop and advocate for local legislation to follow complete streets principals and conduct infrastructure projects, but also to expand and connect the network of bike and pedestrian trails that weave throughout our region. Our goal is to have a true network of trails that will allow residents to bike from Voorheesville, through Albany to Troy, Watervliet and Cohoes, on to Schenectady and the Erie Canalway!

This truly is an exciting time at Capital Roots. We cannot wait to get started on these initiatives and creating communities where all residents not only have access to fresh food, but have safe streets to live, work, and play.

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In This Issue:

Potato Leek Soup

**Ingredients:**
- 1 large leek, stalk removed and coarsely chopped
- 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
- 3 sticks celery, chopped
- 2-3 carrots, peeled and chopped
- 5 medium yellow potatoes
- ½ head of green cabbage, chopped
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- Salt to taste
- Pepper to taste
- Cayenne Pepper to taste (optional)

**Directions:**
- On medium heat, sauté the leek, onion, celery and carrots in olive oil for about 10 minutes.
- Add potatoes and broth and bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer.
- Simmer until potatoes are tender, about 15 minutes.
- Add cabbage and spices and simmer for another 15 minutes.
- When cabbage is tender, use an immersion blender to puree, or transfer to a blender of food processor to puree.
- Puree until there are no vegetable chunks in the soup and it is of uniform consistency.

**Who knew?** Potatoes are an important source of potassium and Vitamin C!