*IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

Capital Roots Concludes Second Year in the Urban Grow Center

Organization celebrates its 40th year with service milestones

TROY, N.Y. - Capital Roots, a nonprofit that nourishes Capital Region residents across four counties with fresh, affordable produce, celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2016 with a record-breaking service year in the Urban Grow Center.

Record numbers and significant growth were seen across the organization as it concluded its second full year in its new headquarters. Through the organization’s Food Access programs, including the Veggie Mobile®, Veggie Mobile® Sprout, Virtual Veggie Mobile®, Healthy Stores and Veggie Rx, 470,000 pounds of fresh produce were made available to neighborhoods across the Capital Region lacking food security.

Capital Roots' Urban Greening and Community Gardens programs brought more green space to communities by planting more than 50 street trees in urban neighborhoods and opening the organization’s 51st community garden at the Eddy Village Green in Cohoes in collaboration with St. Peters Health Partners. The Healthy Streets program, the organization’s newest program which launched in spring of 2016, worked to offer Capital Region residents increased opportunities for safe walking and biking in urban settings.

“This past year we had tremendous programmatic successes,” said Amy Klein, CEO of Capital Roots. “Our programs flourished and we were able to better serve the residents of the Capital Region. We expect to keep this momentum going in 2017 as the organization continues to grow.”

Other 2016 Highlights:

- 85,660 pounds of produce were recovered and donated to 63 regional emergency feeding programs through the Squash Hunger program.
• 55 percent of all distributed produce was purchased from a network of 63 local farmers and producers.
• A new Veggie Rx fresh food prescription program launched with Albany Medical College’s Department of Family and Community Medicine to assist newly pregnant mothers and young families in accessing fresh food.
• The Veggie Rx program jumped into the national spotlight after a study published in Public Health Nutrition found that participants had a mean decrease in BMI of 0.74 kg/m, concluding that Veggie Rx is working.
• Capital Roots became the first nonprofit in NYS to accept WIC Fruit and Vegetable checks at the Produce Market in the Urban Grow Center.
• Virtual Veggie Mobile®, Capital Roots’ online marketplace, expanded to a third retail drop-off location at Schenectady Community Action Program and delivered nearly 1,100 individual/retail orders and 700 institutional/organizational orders.
• Nearly 50 students successfully completed the year-round life skills and job readiness training program, the Produce Project, during which they planted an orchard on the 8th Street Urban Farm.
• The Healthy Stores program expanded to 19 stores across five cities.
• Through Healthy Streets, eight bicycle fix-it stations, seven creative crosswalks and bike racks were installed in the Capital Region. The program also captured grant funds for the City of Troy for improvements to the Uncle Sam Trail.
• The Taste Good Series was taught in nine Capital Region schools and six Headstart programs across a total of 20 classrooms with 356 children.
• The New York State Department of Health-funded a grant partnership with St. Peter’s Health Partners under the Creating Healthy Schools and Communities grant program publically launched, empowering students, families and neighbors to make healthier choices.
• The Urban Grow Center was awarded an Excellence Award from the Center for Active Design, an international award recognizing buildings and public spaces across the globe that contribute to improved public health through their design.

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Capital Roots is a 40-year-old nonprofit organization that nourishes healthy communities with more than 50 Community Gardens, the Veggie Mobile®, Healthy Stores, the Produce Project, Squash Hunger and more. Capital Roots is headquartered at the Urban Grow Center, a regional food hub focused on urban agriculture and produce distribution to four counties, enabling Capital Roots to deliver local food and services to underserved neighborhoods and low-income families. Learn more at www.capitalroots.org.

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